

*The Use, Measures, and Manner
Of Christian Fasting:*

(Especially with Regard to the most Holy
Passion-Week:)

Shewn
In Two DISCOURSES
On the SUBJECT.

To which is added
A SERMON on ACTS xvij. 34.
Lately preach'd at THRIPOLE, near
CAMBRIDGE.

By EDMUND BROME, B. D.
and Fellow of St. John's College,
in CAMBRIDGE.

*Omnis qui se ad Ecclesiam pertinere gloriatur, Legi-
bus vivat Ecclesie; Maxime his quas Antiquitas
roboravit. Fulg. Ferrand. Diac. in Paræn.*

C A M B R I D G E :

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THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE
 The following is a list of the
 of the University of Cambridge
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 In Two DISCOURSES
 On the Subject.

A SERMON
 On the
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By Edmund Bromley, B.D.
 and Fellow of St. John's College,
 in Cambridge.

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1755

VIRO *admodum* REVERENDO
DOCTISSIMOQUE,
HUMFREDO GOWER, S. T. P.
Coll. S^{ti} JOHAN. in Acad. CANTAB.
PRÆFECTO Dignissimo;

SS. Theol. pro D^{na} MARGARETA
PROFESSORI Eximio;

Jejuniorum Ecclesiasticorum
CULTORI Assiduo;

PATRONO, denique, Suo in Æter-
-num Colendo;

Hanc *Jejuniorum Ecclesiasticorum*
Ἀπόδειξιν ἅμα καὶ Ἀποδοχὴν,

In Animi Gratissimi,
Summæque, quâ par est, Observantiæ
Testimonium,

Humillimè Dicat, Consecratque,
Omni Cultu & Obsequio

Devotissimus,

ED. BROME.

VIR O. KENNEDY REVERENDO

DOCTISSIMO

HUMFREDO GOWER S.T.P.

Coll. St. John. in Acad. Cantab.

Præfatus Dignissimus

St. Thome pro Dni MARCARETA

PROFESSORI BRITANNICI

Reverendissimo Ecclesiastico

Castro Albano

Pro Aaron, denique suo in Inter-

am Colendo

Reverendissimo Ecclesiastico

Pro Aaron, denique suo in Inter-

am Colendo

Reverendissimo Ecclesiastico

Castro Albano

Reverendissimo Ecclesiastico

Castro Albano

Pro Aaron

THOMAS

THE PREFACE.

IT cannot but be a Grief of Heart to all well meaning Persons, who desire to see Religion flourishing in the Power and Purity thereof, to observe how generally and scandalously the Holy Church-Fasts are neglected, as if there were no such Duty in Christianity, nor any Orders of the Church framed to that Purpose: Whereby too much Occasion is given to our Adversaries of the Romish Communion (whom we justly blame in many Respects) to publish it in Gath, That in England there is no Fasting. To cure therefore, as much as we can, so great an Evil and Reproach, (of which there appears small hopes in the present Generation;) as some good Men

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have publickly expressed their Wishes, that some Instruction relating to the Honour due to the Clergy were inserted in our Church-Catechism, for the training up young Persons in a greater Reverence to the Priestly Order; So, it might (perhaps) with good Reason be resolved that something concerning the Nature and Duty of Christian Fasting or Abstinence, should be inserted in the same Institution. For, tho' young Children (especially whilst very young) may well be ranked in the number of those weak Vessels that are reputed unfit to hold the strong Liquor, or practice the Discipline of constant Fasting, yet it may not be unprofitable to have the Duty it self early instilled into them; because then we have good Authority, which tells us, that they will not (readily) depart from it when they grow older; but very likely retain and practice it to their Lives end. And 'tis farther
highly

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highly probable, that to begin betimes by gentle Methods, and prudent Steps, to inure young Persons to some degree of Strictness and Retirement, for the sake of better considering, and digesting their Baptismal Covenant, and apprehending the whole Christian Scheme in all its Parts and Branches, might do them no harm, but real and lasting Good. St. Hierom in his 7th Epistle to Læta, about the Education of her Daughter, tho' he expresses his dislike * of laying severe burthens of Fasting on tender Years, yet, in Lent, he tells that Lady, that she may let loose the reins of Abstinence to the young Maid, when she sees her, of her own forwardness speeding. A great Authority, for some indulgence to early Fasting.

* Prohibens in tenellâ ætate onera Abſtinentiæ, in Quadrageſimâ tamen (inquit) continentia vela pandenda ſunt, & tota aurigæ retinacula equis laxanda properantibus. S. Hieron. Epist. 7. ad Lætiam.

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St. Luk. v.
38.
*As to Erasmus's Exposition of our Saviour's Parable of the new Wine and old Bottles, &c. That he thereby intended to shew, † That Men are not on a sudden to be haled to a more austere Life, but to be inured thereto by certain Steps and Degrees: Which may seem an Objection against that general Observance of this Duty, which in the following Papers is recommended: It may be answered, 1st. That the primary Meaning of the Words is certainly this, That Christ's own Disciples, whilst they remained in such a * State of natural Weakness or imperfect Regeneracy as made them fitly compared to old or weak Bottles, were not to be obliged to the strong and working Duty of Stated Fasting; Not until their Faith became strengthned and confirmed by his own ‡ Death,*

† (Θέλει, ἀλλ') ἐκ εὐθιῶς. Luc. 5. ult.

* Οὐπω γεγενῆσιν ἰσχυροὶ οἱ μαθηταί, οὐπω ᾤδ' τῷ Πνεύματος ἀνεκαίνισθ' ἔχουσιν. S. Chrysost. in Matt. 9.

‡ Hinc confirmati observare omnia dura & aspera —
Resur-

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Resurrection, Ascension into Heaven, and the Mission of the Holy Ghost to lead them into all Truth, to renew and enable them (like new Bottles which are capable of containing new and fermenting Liquors) to sustain, and improve under the weight of this Spiritual Duty. But 2dly; owning and allowing Erasmus's accommodation of the Words to be very good and proper, That the Duty of Christian Fasting is not presently, in the Strictness of it, or highest Degree, to be exacted of young Beginners, nor are Penitents, or new Converts in Religion to be urged immediately to the Practice of the most difficult parts of their Faith, or, perhaps, to such degrees of Penance as may be adequate to the Crimes

& severiora Jejunii & Continentia sustinere Præcepta. S. Hieron. in Matt. 9.

As having seen the Example of their Masters Humiliation and Sufferings, Patience and Fortitude; and knowing that the Disciple is not above his Master. Bishop Gunning of Lent-Fast. p. 14.

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of their former Lives, but to be advanced thereto by proper Steps, beginning at some of the lower Acts of Mortification, lest our Saviour's ἀποτέγει οὐκ ἐπιβέλτα, or Care that both be preserved, both the precious liquor of Christian Fasting, and the vessels of Honour fitted, or fitting for it; lest his Direction for preserving (in all Cases) as near as we can, both the Person and the Duty, be unhappily and fatally misapplied, to the damage both of the Institution (or Discipline) it self, and also of many Christian Professors; Who by such † unseasonable Severity might be brought into an ill Opinion of Fasting, and so think that the old Wine (if I may so apply this phrase) of their former vitious Courses, or mistaken Form of

† Ne per austeritatem nimiam, etiam Credulitatem, quam nunc habere videtur, amittat. S. Hier. in Matt. 9.

Καὶ χάσμα χίεον χύεται, and the Rent be made worse] q. d. Ne oriatur Divisio in mente discipuli recentis & infirmi, aut Schisma & separatio a reliquis Fratribus. Vid. Bishop Gunning of Lent-Fast, p. 14,

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Religion, was better than the Christian Institution; yet will this be no Exception against pressing the enjoyn'd Duty of Fasting on the generality, of Christians, now after that the Spiritual Strength or Renovation of Mind derivable from the Mysterious Truths of our Religion, and especially from the Descent and Operations of the H. Ghost are so freely offered and tendred to all Men, that all will be inexcusable who do not now make use of the heavenly Aid afforded for so holy a Purpose.

If any are apprehensive that I am going to urge them to a rigorous Observance of the Forty Days of Lent, or to prove that Christians ought to pass the whole 40 Days in Strict Abstinence and Retirement, they may so far dismiss their Fears, as to understand That they will find a greater Moderation allowed them in that famous Spring-Fast,

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Fast, and that a small part only, in comparison, is bound upon them, as of Necessity, for close and strict Fasting: But yet I willingly acquaint them beforehand, That in the following Papers they will also discern themselves to be earnestly call'd upon, at every Return of Lent, in honourable Memory of the Bridegroom's Fasting 40 Days and 40 Nights for us, and his Amazing Death for Sinners at the End of the Paschal Season, together with the Power and Authority of the Church interposing to secure the Duty, that they will find themselves, I say, called upon, from the very beginning of the Lenten-Fast, to enter upon a stricter and more continent Course of Life than ordinary, and through the whole 40 Days to observe some degree of religious penitential Practice, abstaining, as much as may be, thro' that whole Space (that I may use the Words of the Homily) from all delicious Pleasures and Delectations
World-

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Worldly; and, about the Conclusion of it, as also on the Wednesdays and Fridays in that Season (those Weekly Passion-Days) enlarging and intending their Devotion. This was practised Anciently; † This is expected now; and to the Worlds end will be required, because the Ground or Cause of it, The Death of The LORD, will remain a perpetual Reason for such Regard. And I add, that whoever shall peruse these Pages they will see themselves pressed to a more conscientious religious Observance of the Weekly-Friday Fast, the Vigils, Ember-Days, and other Fasts of the Church, in regard to the Advice and Counsel of the Apostles, the Principle and Practice of the Primitive Church, the Command

† The Ancient Doctors of the Church agree unanimously on this Caution, of *Observanda quotidiana, sed moderata Quadragesimæ jejunia*, That the forty Days of Lent are to be observed, but with just and equitable Moderation. Bp. Gunning's *Lent-Fast*. p. 164. 167.

Cum Domino penitus jejunante non observas Quadragesima moderata jejunia. A tart Admonition of S. Ambrose. Serm. 34. de Quadrages.

and

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and Authority of our own Church, And, above all, with respect to the Precept, Approbation, and Encouragement of Almighty God himself, who has been pleased to promise a publick Reward to all sincere Observers of this Christian Duty, (and, sure, his Word is good Security;) ~~then~~ perhaps they have hitherto practised.

than

Acts xvij.
24.

† Mr. Palmer, and
Mr. Conway.

What is said in the last of these Discourses concerning our Dissenters (now a great Bulk) their worshipping God, too like the Athenians, in an ignorant Manner, is a very melancholy Truth; and there appears small hopes of Remedy, till their unhappy Leaders, who detain them in the paths of Error, can first be perswaded to quit their Schism. Praised be God, † some of those (once) mistaken Guides have lately, upon good and solid Conviction (as we cannot but believe) abandoned the Separation; and, as I hope and hear, have since met with that kind
and

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and charitable Treatment that is due to all those, who sincerely come in to the bosom of the Church. That Great and Good Prelate, the Lord BISHOP of LONDON, has distinguished himself by his Christian Concern for, and Encouragement to such good Examples; For which, amongst all Well-Wishers to Peace and Uniformity, I humbly desire to return his LORDSHIP my share of Thanks.

*I am sure, none will accuse me of any Ostentation of Learning, for what I have collected in the first of these Discourses from Dr. Hammond: Nor do I pretend to have fetched all the Citations made in the second of them, directly from the Originals. I own myself to have been much beholden for those Confirmations of this Writing to the very Learned Bp GUNNING, who has happily laboured in that Way. However, if the Helps borrowed for either of those Eminent Persons, may
be*

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be found to give light and strength to the Subjects I am upon, I have my aim.

I shall only acquaint the Reader, That he may here expect to meet with much of the Sense of the forenamed Eminent Bishop's large and most learned Book of the Paschal, or Lent-Fast; the Substance whereof I have endeavoured, in as faithful a Manner as I cou'd, to weave into the 2d (especially) of these Discourses; sometimes also adorning this small Work with some larger portions of that excellent Writing: In which, I hope I may have done some degree of Service; since, if that Learned Treatise may be thought to be shaded with any defect, it seems to be this, That it is penned in such an elaborate and Scholastick Stile as lies not level with the capacities of all Readers, and may, perhaps, cost a good Proficient some pains to collect all the sense and treasure of it.

DISCOURSE I.

S^c MARK ij. 20.

*But the Days will come, when
the Bridegroom shall be
taken away from them,
and then shall they Fast in
those Days.*

IF we consider the use of *Fasting*,
and the great Benefits that accom-
pany the Practice of it, we shall
find that our Blessed Saviour shewed
himself no less a true Friend, than a
wise Instructor in recommending this
Duty so much as he does; whilst, in
his divine Sermon on the Mount, he
gives *Fasting* an equal place with those
grand Christian Sacrifices of *Almsgiving*
and *Prayer*; plainly signifying his Ap-
probation of it in the Parable of the
proud *Pharisee*; in the words of my Text
evidently declaring that after his *De-
parture* all his Disciples should *Fast*;
and lastly, in the forementioned Ser-
mon, promising an *eminent Reward* to
the due performance of it, to those,
A that

Mat. vi. 16.

Luk. xvij.

14.

The Use, &c.

that is, who *fast* not from a vain glorious Humour to get *praise of Men*, but to please God, *My Father*, saith he, *which seeth in secret shall reward you Openly*. Which promised *Reward* one would think enough to set all Men to the practice of this Duty; which is in it self so full of Uses & Benefits that it is not easy to recount them all. For, *Christian Fasting*, by which I mean *An orderly well timed Abstinence from the common provisions of Meat, for the purposes of Religion*, is, in the right use of it exceeding profitable,

First, As it prevents a great deal of Mischief; And

Secondly, As it procures us a great deal of Good.

First, True *Christian Fasting* is very useful for the preventing a great deal of Mischief that would otherwise befall us:

It is evident to all how *Fasting* infallibly restrains the Disorders of Drunkenness & Revelling, to which it is opposite; and that not only for the time, but if once a Man uses himself to this
sober

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sober Discipline, he will hardly ever be betrayed into those hurtful Excesses; it not being easy to run into Extreame, or Actions that are widely distant. Again, *Fasting* does *Medicinally*, and in the nature of Physick, check and controul those wasting Sins of Pride, Anger, Uncleaness, by cooling the Spirits, reducing that excess of Blood and Humors which are the very seeds of those Vices, to a more harmless Measure, and by bringing the mind into a meek & gentle Temper. In regard to one of which effects of holy *Fasting*, that of correcting * Pride or Haughtiness, the Psalmist says, *I chastened, or humbled my soul with Fasting.* ^{Psal. lxiix. 10.}

This *Spiritual Physick* does also prevent or dispel those gross Vapours, which deprave the Understanding, and dispose to † Covetousness, and love of

* Qui scienter *Abstinencia* virtutem tenent, eo affligunt Carnem suam, quo Animæ frangant superbiam, & quasi de quodam fastigio *Arrogantiae* suæ descendant. S. Hier. Epist. 14. ad Celantiam.

† *Self-conceit, Covetousness and such like Sins* proceed commonly from the Corruption of the Fancy, caused by those malignant Humors which, by reason of overmuch Eating, are exhaled from the Stomach into the Head, and there disturb the Imagination so as to represent things as in a magnifying Glass, and make them seem what they are not, Great and Good. Now Fasting prevents the very engendering of such Fumes, &c. Bp. Beveridge's Serm. Vol. I. pag. 319, 320.

this World; and which also by clogging the Operations of the Soul, beget Dulness in Devotion and a great Deadness as to things Spiritual. In short, true *Fasting* is an excellent preventive of all manner of Sinfulness, and the Evils consequent thereto, as a proper Curb and Restraint to them; and such a Bridle it is that, without it, Sin, that great Destroyer of Mankind, would grow unruly and irresistible by us. In regard to whose Imperious Tyranny, what is spoken in *Job* of the *Leviathan*, (*that King over all the Children of Pride*) the same may we say of Sin, that untamed Monster, with some small variation, that without *Fasting*, godly Exhortation *cannot make him flee*; the Scriptures *are turned by him into stubble*; he *accounteth Prayers as straw*; he *laugheth at the Counsel of the Ancients*, and conclude *that no Weapon laid against him can hold*, without that of holy † *Abstinence*, by the help of which, and which only, he can be subdued, and all his mischievous Effects prevented. So kind and good was our Blessed Saviour in making *Fasting* a Duty, and strictly obliging all his Followers to the observance of it: Which, as it is a sure defence against

Job. xlvj.
26. &c.

† τὸ μέγα
ὄπλον τῆς
Νηστείας. S.
Basil 2d
Sermon of
Lent.

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gainst manifold Mischiefs that would otherwise invade us; so is it,

Secondly, A very special Means and Help of doing us a great deal of real Good,

First. Religious *Fasting*, in the very design of it, as it is a withdrawing from the World, and allotting that time for Spiritual Exercises, which we use to employ about our Bodies, or secular Concerns, gives us a good opportunity of praying to God (which should be our first Business) to enlighten our Minds to see our sinful State, and our miserable Condition by Sin, and also for his Grace to assist us in that good Work we are going about, I mean, the Work of true *Fasting or Abstinence*; which, when rightly perform'd, is spent in a serious Review of our Baptismal Covenant, and comparing our Lives with the Rules of God's Commands, and where we find that we have offended against any of them, there noting those Sins with their several Aggravations (as if they have been committed against Light, Knowledge, former Vows to the contrary, or were attended with Presumption and Ingratitude) and by humble Confession, and hearty Sorrow bewail-

ing all such Offences and forming solemn purposes of Amendment and Obedience, that so we may obtain God's Pardon for what is past, and his Grace to live well for the future. This is the proper work of Beginners in Religion on their *Fast-Days*; as it is that of greater Proficients, to examine what progress they make in Vertue, how Sin dies, and Grace advances in them, and by Reading and Meditation to proceed to farther degrees of Perfection: Which, when it is done as it ought to be, is a good Work, *and an acceptable Day unto the Lord.*

For we know

2dly. That Christians are commanded in Scripture (as they would assure their *Vocation*) to approve themselves to be *dead indeed unto Sin, and alive to God*, and, as those who have a vital Principle in them, *to grow in Grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour, to abound more and more in knowledge and in all Judgment, (or † sense of spiritual things;)* to put off all these, *Anger, Wrath, Malice, Blasphemy, filthy Communication out of their Mouth, and to put on the New-Man which*

† Ep. vi. 22.
or Phil. i.
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which is renewed in knowledge after the Image of the Creator; to wean their Affections from this World, and to place them on heavenly Objects; to have their Conversation in Heaven; to be sober and hope to the End; to exercise themselves unto Godliness; to build themselves up in their most holy Faith; to crucifie the Flesh with the Affections and Lusts; to strive to enter in at the straight Gate; to give all diligence to add one Grace to another; to have the Word of God dwelling richly in them, in all Wisdom; to hate even the Garments spotted by the Flesh; to gain such an entire Victory over their Passions, as that when they are reviled, they revile not again, but patiently suffer even for Well Doing, and return Acts of real Kindness for Injuries, thus overcoming Evil with Good; and finally to be ready to part with whatever is near or dear to them for the sake of Christ; and, to this end, to be daily dressing up themselves in their Spiritual Armour, putting on especially the Breastplate of Faith and Love, and for an Helmet the hope of Salvation, that they may be able to withstand in the evil Day, and having done all to stand against their Ghostly Adverſaries, as

¹ Pet. i. 5.

² Pet. iij.

¹⁴

Rom. xij.

Ephes. vj.

¹⁴

mindful that they *wrestle not against Flesh and Blood only*, but *against Principalities, against Powers, against wicked and malicious Spirits*: Which great Ends and most worthy Atchievements are by no means to be attained by us, unless at certain *set and stated Times*, despising the satisfactions of Sense, and the delights of Company, and following the Advice of our Holy Mother the Church, we retire from our Capital and treacherous Enemy, the World, for the sake of conversing with God and ourselves, in holy *Solitude*; there often revolving the several parts of our Duty, the Promises made to us, the Enemies we have to encounter; our Dangers, and Encouragements; considering the Examples of the Saints, our Forerunners in the Christian Race, observing how Sin decays, and Vertue grows in us; marking where we are most easily wounded, and there keeping a more especial Guard; *Praying also with all Prayer and Supplication in the Spirit*: For, alas! since the great Transgression, we are *by Nature inclin'd only to evil*, and *that continually*: and though by our Baptism the guilt of that first Sin be done away, and we have a *principle of new Life* planted

Ephes. vj.
12.

planted in us, yet our Original Infection doth so far remain (being left in the regenerate, by the Allwise God for their trial and exercise) that without an holy Care and Industry, we are still easily betray'd into Folly and Error; *the carnal mind* prevails in us, and we soon become *dead* again in *Trespases* and Sins. The means of Grace afforded by the Gospel are indeed abundantly sufficient for our purpose, but, that they may have a due effect on our Hearts, and fructify in good Works, there is need of our best Pains and Endeavors, since the Enemies of our Peace are also powerful and numerous. Our Blessed Saviour in the Parable of *the Sower* hath instructed us that a careless and supine Behavior will by no means serve in this Affair. We must come prepared both with *Meekness* and *Knowledge* that the divine *Word* may have a kindly influence on our hearts.

Ephes. ij. 1.

St. Matt. xij.

They who hear the Word of God without † *understanding it*, (i. e. without *considering or laying it to heart*)

† Understandeth it not.] Συνίημι signifies commonly *laying to heart, thinking on, considering*, being the same with συνμαλῶ, Luke ij. 19. so Hesychius συνίσαι, νοῦσαι & ὀδύει. ο. Σιγή νῦν ἐνίς καὶ τίρπις. Consider and please thy self in private. Vid. Hamond on Matt. xij. 19.

or being prejudiced against it, are in the Gospel likened to untill'd Ground, or a *hard Path* in a Field, on which if any *Seed* chances to fall, it cannot enter at all into it, but lies only on the surface expos'd to the foot of every Traveller, or else to be devoured by the *fowls of the Air*: And just so when the Gospel is preached to any who have not before *consider'd* it, but been tempted to lead wicked Lives, they *lay it not to heart*, it makes no *impression* on them; but if they retain any part of it, 'tis only with a design to † despise it themselves, and make sport of it with others; and what lies so loose and superficial on their Minds, *Satan, the Prince of the Air, coming*, and offering them some new worldly Temptation, easily *catches it away* (as birds do Corn that is spilt on the Ground) that it shall be sure to do them no manner of Good. *These are they who received Seed by the way side.*

† Καὶ ἡ γῆ πεπατημένη, and it was trodden down, Luk. viii. 5.] This Expression concerning the Seed sown by the way side, (and not mentioned by St. Matthew or St. Mark) seems to signify (says Dr. Whitby) a great contempt of the Divine Word, the things which we tread under our Feet being accounted vile, and not worthy to be taken up from the Ground. Vid. Whitby in loc. v. 19.

But

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But not an ignorant Contempt or prophane Rejection only, but also the want of a through Consideration and Digestion of the whole Christian Law, in all its essential Parts and Branches, is sufficient to render it unprofitable to us.

They who look but a little way into Christianity, who consider only the easier Doctrines, the comfortable Promises, the smoother part of our Religion, and, being pleased and affected therewith, do *hear the Word with gladness*, are fitly compared to *Seed sown on stony (or rocky) places*; which, having no *deepness of Earth*, quickly *springs up*, and shews it self above Ground; but, for want of a deep and strong *root* to support it, and of Moisture to nourish it, the feeble unthrifty Plant is presently *scorched* and withered, when the *Sun gets up* to any strength: And just so it fares with the half-instructed Christian, who has viewed only the pleasanter side of his Religion, been much taken with the Promises of the Gospel, which are said to respect *this Life as well as another*,¹ *Tim. iv.* but not duly weighed and pondered⁹ all that he must do and suffer to continue

* Πρόσκει-
τος ἵνα.
Mark iv.
17.

tinue a *Christian indeed*; has not taken care to let the harsher Doctrines of the Gospel *take root* in him; who though he *may hear the Word* with some *delight* and pleasure at the first, that is, the joyful part of it, and be often talking of the excellency of Religion, and recommending it to others, and perhaps, with *Peter*, declaring that although he shou'd be put to *die* for Christ, he wou'd not *deny him*; yet this Fair-weather-Professor is able to *endure* (or *believe*)* *but for a time*, for afterwards, when a *storm* comes to fall, or the Season to grow dry and scorching, when *Persecution or Affliction* *ariseth for the Word's sake*, immediately he is *offended*; when it comes to that, that he must either part with his Faith or his Wealth, that he must forego Places of Profit and Honor, for *revealed* Opinions, he presently cries out with the troubled Disciples, *This is a hard Saying, who can hear it?* Alas! he was not *prepared* for those Precepts which are grievous to *Flesh and Blood*, such as *Self-denial*, *taking up the Cross*, *parting with all for Christ's sake*, (the *passive* part of his Obedience;) so that when Christianity is persecuted, when any chargeable, or other

other suffering Duties come before him, whatever his Resolutions have formerly been, he now shrinks at the face of Danger; with the *Rich man* in the Gospel, he goes away *sorrowful*, if he must part with his *beloved Possessions*, or be disappointed in his worldly Hopes; for want of a good *Soil*, to let the Word of God *take root* in, (like *Seed sown on Rocky Ground*) all his fine Graces, which once made something of a Shew and Flourish, now *wither away*, and die before the least *fiery Tryal*; they are able to *bring no fruit to ripeness*; he goes away discontented, and will *walk no more* with Christ. *And this is he who received Seed into stony places.*

But not the want of Mould and Moisture only, is able to make a *Plantation* miscarry; but farther, if after much care is taken to give the *Seed* a due *deepness of Earth*, the careless Husbandman shall yet neglect to destroy some latent roots of *Briars and Thorns*, to which the *Soil* is subject, even those *springing up* with the good *Corn*, will so overgrow and *choak* it, that it shall *yield no fruit* grateful to the Reaper: And if they who have been taught the whole

whole Law of Christ, received the severest Precepts of the Gospel into their Hearts, and attend many Means of Grace and Spiritual Improvement, with *delight* and pleasure, shall yet neglect to mortify the *desires of the Flesh*, their natural corrupt *Appetites*, which, (as the *Spirit* or Rational faculty inclines to vertuous Actions) do strongly dispose to Sin and Folly, those *evil Affections* unsubdued shall produce such a rueful *Mixture* of disorderly Lusts and Passions, as, * 1st, An *Immoderate Concern* for the things of this Life, which makes us too intent on getting, and too impatient of parting with them, though on just and necessary Occasions; 2^{ly}, A *Love of Secular Pleasures*, either those which as being the *works of the Flesh* exclude directly from Heaven, such as *Fornication, Uncleannesse, Gluttony*; or, which not being sinful in their Nature, such as the Entertainments of the *Stage, Theatre, Gaming*, (if I may say so of the former) yet being used in Excess, or in hurtful Circumstances, become thereby criminal; or 3^{ly}, Our *Lustings after other things*, as for *rich Apparel, stately Buildings, magnificent Attendance, &c.* above our Rank; or the desire of *popular Applause*

* Vid.
Whitby on
Matt. xiii.
Not. k.

plause, high Estimation in the World, Reputation for Wit and Parts, great Places of Profit and Honor; or lastly, even those other distracting Worldly Cares and Concerns (of whatever sort) which fill our Heads so full of Contrivances, and so employ our time, that we are not at leisure, seriously to think upon, and carefully to pursue our Spiritual Welfare; I say, all or any of these, if suffered to take *root* in our Hearts, and *gain* our Affections, and, as it were, to † *spring up together* with our Graces (like noxious Weeds amongst good Corn) they will so check and stifle the Power that the Divine

*Συμφύσι-
ται αἱ ἀ-
καρδίαι.
Luk. viii.*

Word shou'd have over our Hearts, so dull and deaden that Prospect of future Rewards, which shou'd animate us to Vertue, and so fasten our Affections to this World; and thereby, lastly, so debase and adulterate our very best Actions, that our Lives will be found a *medly* of good and evil; we shall never be able to practise such constant and sincere Obedience as will be pleasing to God, and profitable to our selves; we shall *bring no fruit to perfection: And these are they who received Seed among the Thorns.*

The

The bringing forth fruit with Patience, being to be effected only by him who imitates the good *Houſholder*, who having purchaſed a Field, or received it by Inheritance, preſently ſets about the cultivation of it, in order to a fruitful Crop. To which purpoſe, he orders all the Sticks and Stones and Rubbiſh that might remain in it, to be gathered and cleaned away, all the Briars and Thorns, and other harmful Shrubs and Weeds to be rooted up and deſtroyed; he gets the whole piece duly tilled and fitted for ſowing, then plants it with the beſt Grain, and ſets a Hedge about it; and when all this is done (to uſe the words of St. James) *he waiteth for the precious fruit, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter Rain*; for the obtaining whereof, he is not wanting to make his Addreſſes to Heaven, and render Almighty God propitious to him, by the beſt Sacrifices that he can offer: And ſo the true Chriſtian having by the Gift of God, and the pious care of his Parents, early received that great Bleſſing of the Goſpel, an *Incorporation into the Body of Chriſt*, or *Title to the Heavenly Kingdom*, that *unfading Inheritance*, (like a Treasu-

ſure

sure hid in a Field;) becoming sensible of his Advantage, what a Stock he has to go upon, and what Danger there is of miscarrying, he presently sets about the Improvement of his *Talent*, by all the likely Means that he can meet with; he often thinks and meditates on the value of his Trust; he lays before his Eyes the Benefits he shall receive by looking well after it, and the Toils, Adversities, and Troubles he must endure by taking a due Care of it; he makes many serious Resolutions with himself of avoiding whatever may be likely to rob him of his Treasure, and of pursuing all things which may conduce to its Preservation; and finding his own corrupt Nature (that *Field* where this *Treasure is hid*) to be his chiefest Enemy, and most likely to endanger the depraving the *Rich Mine* committed to his Care, by converting it into the same *Soil* with it self, he resolutely sets himself to *mortify all his evil and corrupt Affections* by the holy Exercises of *Self-denial*, *Watching*, *Fasting*; he has his frequent appointed Days of considering and ruminating on all the parts of his Obligations (the Articles by which he holds his Tenure) of enquiring into the state of his Spi-

B

ritual

ritual Accounts, how he observes those sacred Laws and Conditions, on the keeping whereof all his Happiness depends, that is, how manfully and successfully he makes war with Sin (that Enemy of *his Peace*) and takes the part of Vertue; he labours to enrich his Mind by storing it with the *good Word* of God (that *incorruptible Seed*, which bears *the Fruit of the Tree of Life*;) he provides all proper Arms and Instruments for defending himself and his *Treasure* from the Invasions of Enemies; and, if at any time, through his own Negligence, or the power of his Adversaries, any Breach be made on his Enclosure, he delays not to get it restored; above all, he solicits the Favor of Heaven, the Aids and Assistances of God's Holy Spirit for Success in this great Affair, attending, to this End, with an obstinate Diligence on all the opportunities of Grace and spiritual Improvement; (thus *rising Night and Day*, whilst *the Seed of the Word springs* up in his Heart by the Virtue of an invisible Power;) by which Means, and the adding of Constancy to his other Endeavors, the faithful Christian becomes enabled to resist all Temptations and Assaults upon his Vertue,

S. Mar. iv.
27.

Vertue, to prevail and triumph over all his sensual worldly Appetites, and to bring forth such fruits of good Works, and god-like Actions, with Patience, or † Perseverance, as shall end and be rewarded in eternal Life. ‡ This is he ^{† Ε, ὁ σπ. μόν.} who received Seed into good Ground; who, in an honest and good heart, having heard the Word, keeps (or * retains) ^{* Κατέχ.} it; which also beareth fruit, and brings forth in a gracious Measure.

By the explication of which Divine Parable, we may discern the Use, Advantage and Necessity, as of a strict Observance of all other Laws and Rules of the Gospel, so especially of *Christian Fasting* or *Abstinence* (as necessary to the Christian as Digging, Plowing and Sowing is to the Husbandman) of which I may say, that if it be not the very best of all others, it is at least one of the most efficacious Helps and Instruments that Christ has appointed for the ad-

‡ Ὅς ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν τὴν καλὴν.] See, saith Theophylact, how rare are good Men, and how few are Saved; for only the fourth part of the Seed fell on good Ground, and was preserved.

Observe also the Gradation: The Seed sown by the way-side, comes not up at all; The Seed sown on stony Ground comes up, but encreaseth not; The Seed sown among Thorns increaseth, but bears no fruit; The Seed sown on good Ground only brings forth fruit to Perfection. Vid. Whitby on Mark iv. 20.

vancing us in holy Life, and securing our Heavenly Interest; and, without a due Regard to which holy Discipline, for the sake of *considering* over and over all the parts of our Faith, both the Terrors and Promises of the Lord, the more harsh and difficult as well as easier Doctrines of the Gospel, and pondering deeply and often on the mighty Difference that there is between visible and unseen Objects, till the former, in their most plausible Dress and Colours, and when set off to the greatest Advantage, come to appear in our Eyes, (as indeed they are in the comparison) the most vile and worthless things; and so as to work our selves up to a perfect hatred of all Sin, and love of Vertue, and by the Blessing of God (which is never wanting to honest Endeavours) effectually to set about the *mortifying all our evil and corrupt Affections*, and of getting the contrary Vertues implanted in our Souls; and lastly, when the *good Seed* is thus carefully sown, the *Plantation* so happily finisht, unless we often renew and repeat this useful Exercise, for the purpose of weeding out the *Tares* and *Darnel*, every vicious Inclination that will be apt to *spring up* amongst the Good Corn, and corrupt

rupt the pure Word of God planted and thriving in us, and defile our Purposes, and also for the procuring from Heaven those Dews of Divine Grace, the Blessing of God's Holy Spirit, which may enable the *Seed sown*, to take such *deep Root* in our Hearts, that no strength of Temptation, no descending *Rain*, no sweeping *Floods*, no blustering *Winds*, not even the *fiery Darts* of our invisible Adversaries shall be able to shake or disturb our well-grounded Faith; I say, without some such serious and religious Observance as this, in obedience to the Rules of the Church, and the Directions of Scripture, and our Spiritual Guides, 'tis not imaginable, 'tis not conceivable, nay, 'tis not, morally speaking, possible that the Word of God shou'd ever prosper kindly in our Hearts, that we shou'd ever *bring forth* the Fruits thereof in their season, or victoriously obtain *that Prize*, to the *apprehending* whereof a great deal of timely Care, and Industry, and Contention is required, and which depends so entirely on a patient and persevering Endurance unto the End.

To pursue this Argument yet farther; (I mean, the necessity of *Fasting*, and *Retirement*, on account of the Difficulties of our Christian *Warfare*;) Our Christian Course is a * *Race*, in which we all strive not for a *leafy wreath* of Bays or Olive, but for † *unfading* Rewards, tho' of a distinguished nature, according to Mens different Merit. They who *run* best shall receive the fairest *Crown*; but if we would gain any at all, we must be sure to strive *lawfully*, that is, besides our *running* in the very Ground marked out for us, we must be strictly careful to observe all the other Νόμοι ἀθλήσεως or *Laws of contending*, all the wholesom Rules and Decrees of the Church, and amongst the rest, in a special manner, the Order of *Christian Fasting*. We must not think in this *Race* to meet with no opposition; we shall no sooner put our foot on this Ground, but we shall see ourselves beset on all sides with Enemies, who will seem combined to defeat our Success. *The Cares and Fears* of this World, the Desire of getting and

* Called in Greek, δρόμος, ποδοκίνη, σάδιον.

† Στέφανος ἀφ' αὐγῆς, ἀμείραντος, in opposition to φύλλονος, or the corruptible garland given in the Græcian Games.

Apprehension of loosing these Earthly things, so natural to us, (like *running* with our Garments on) will be a great *weight* upon us, and very apt to encumber us in our Course: *The Pleasures of Life* on the other hand, will be continually soliciting us out of our way, to whose Enticements if we listen, (and who is there that is not sometime seduced by them?) we shall receive a shrewd Mischief, be very much retarded in our *Race*, if not wholly disabled from getting into the Way again, before *Night* comes on, *wherein none can run*: And not the grosser Temptations only will endanger us, but we shall many Times meet with an *ἐπιπόρευσις* *ἁμαρτίας*, a Sin or Allurement *so fairly circumstantiated* (as the Adjective signifies) and that brings along with it, such *specious pretences* for a Compliance, that we shall possibly think we are doing a great deal of Good, when, alas! we only give our selves a grievous Blow. Besides these Dangers, *the Accuser of the Brethren*, the *Prince of Darkness* himself (not the less to be feared for being invisible) will be sure to give all the disturbance possible to the hopeful *Racer*, by raising up such persecution and trouble against him,

that he must be many times content *through* * *Blood* and Death it self to arrive at his *Crown*. Which being the Case; what prospect is there, but that the unequal Candidate must needs fail and be disappointed, † *grow weary and faint in his mind*, leave off and quit the Field ingloriously in the midst of the *Race*, unless with the *Græcian* Combatants of old he uses much diligence in preparing himself for all parts of this great Work; and, as they, against any of their famous Exercises, observed ‡ such Rules of *Diet* as were most for their purpose, and also ab-

* *Μέχρ' αἵματος ἀνταγωνίζεσθαι*, Heb. xij. 4.] This was applicable to those *Athletæ* among the *Græcians*, who had not only *Courage* enough to engage in the *ἀσπυγμὴ* or *σκιμαγρία*, the first lighter Skirmishes, but also to proceed to the *στάτα Pugna*, or set Combate, fall to down right blows with their *Cæstus* in their hands, which ordinarily brought the *Blood* along with them: And for such Encounters should the Christian be prepared in the *τὰ τῆς ψυχῆς Ὀλύμπια*, The *Olympicks* of the Soul. *Vid.* Hamond on Heb. xij. Not. d.

† *Κάμνουν καὶ ἐκλύουσι*] These are *Agonistical* Words, and signifie (in relation to the ancient *Græcian* *Ἀγῶνις*, or Games,) to grow tired or disheartned in those Combats; being the same as *Prælii detrectatio*, or giving over the Attempt in the intermediate space, like wounded or wearied Men. *Ibid.*

‡ The Diet of the *Athletæ* was a prescribed set Diet, both for the quantity, and quality, appointing so much, and of those kinds which were fittest for the Turn. *Id.* on 1 Cor. ix. Not. h.

stained

stained strictly from the *use of Women*; so he be careful in obliging himself to the practice of *Fasting* or *Abstinence*, and has his set appointed Days of *Retirement* from the Customs and Pleasures of the World.

Which the resolved Christian employs in a serious Meditation on the Remainder of his *Race*, and how he may perform it with Success. In attending on which good Work, he fails not to cast back many a thoughtful Reflection concerning the Ground he is *stretching* upon, whether it be indeed the very right Path to Bliss, and whether he contains himself strictly * within the *Bounds* prescribed; being sensible that a Mistake herein renders all his others Labours vain and fruitless; he considers over and over the Vanity of all Earthly things, and having arrived at a full perswasion, that there is no comparison between the very best

*In the Græcian Races there was not only the two Terms from whence and to which they ran, the first called *βῆμα*, the latter *τέλος* or *σκοπός*, but also *κανὼν*, the rule, or white Line, marking out the Path, within which they were to run, and which if they transgressed or ran over, they did not *νομίμως ἀθλῆσαι*, run or contend regularly, and consequently they lost the Prize. Vid. Hamond on 1 Cor. ix. Not. 9.

worldly

Worldly enjoyments, and what he is contending for, he spends some Time *in* * *laying aside every such Weight*, every secular Advantage and Desire that clogs his Motions, and hinders his Speed, being resolved rather to run quite † *naked* than be stopped in his Course: and, being well apprized that, for the obtaining his desired End, he must not only be ready to part with all earthly Possessions, but also many times make his way to the *Goal* thro' positive Sufferings and Afflictions, he spares no pains to furnish himself with the Armor of Patience and Fortitude, for sustaining all the Attacks of his Enemies; against whose Assaults he heartens and encourages himself by the reviewing the *Prize of his high Calling*, getting as clear a sight as possible of the *propos'd Reward*, (that *Crown* which hangs at the end of the *Goal*;) and by well reflecting also on the ‡ *Dan-*

* Πάντας ὄγκον ἀποθέμενος. Heb. xij. 1.

† In the ancient Foot-Races amongst the Græcians, the Contenders generally ran naked, or without their Garments; thence called γυμνασται from their naked running. Id. on Heb. xij. Not. a.

‡ The Græcian Stadium or Race-ground, (if some observe aright) was bounded with Swords on one side, and the River Alpheus on the other, so that if they transgressed the Limits prescribed, they not only lost the Prize, but fell
ger

ger of loosing it, that, if he miscarries, he must, for his Cowardice, suffer infinitely worse Torments than any he can now endure: and, if in such a Season as this, (as he is halting along) any irregular Passion presumes to give him trouble, any strong Temptation incites him to step out of his Way, or slack his Pace, he sticks not (even whilst others are fighting against him) to wage War with himself, and, as the ancient *πύκται*, or *Cuffers*, did to their Adversaries) if need be, to *beat himself black and blue, to use, that is, great Austerities towards his Body, by withdrawing from it more and more of its wonted Succours, (the most effectual way of reducing that Enemy,) he leaves no method untried to †bring it into Subje-

into the River, or on the Swords point: which, says Dr. Hammond is very applicable to our Christian Race. Vid Hammond. on Cor. ix. Not. 5.

* Ὑποπιπάζειν] This word in the primary notion and most literal sense of it, signifies, to strike under the Eye, or in the Face, as the *πύκται* were wont to do, pugnis ductis coestibusque impactis lividum reddere. Ib. on 1 Cor. ix. Not. o.

† Δελαρωμαίν] Imports to bring under or subdue, as the *πύκται* or Cuffers strove to do by their fellow-Combatants, that so they might not be able to resist or strike, and is the same with ἐλίσσειν, to oppress and get down the Adversary. And, Fasting is thus expressed by the Arabians sui domatio & depressio, & subjugatio concupiscentiæ, the taming and depressing of himself and subduing of Concupiscence. Id. on 1 Cor. ix. Not. o.

wards

ction, and quel so dangerous a Rebellion: and lastly, by this Means, he provides as well as he is able, against the most subtile wiles and snares of the Tempter, and the Treacheries of his own deceitful heart, remembring, above all things, to implore the Divine Blessing on his own Endeavours, which by this Method is most effectually procured.

And thus, by the dextrous use of that tried Instrument of overcoming, *Holy Fasting*, or *Abstinence*, the faithful Christian becomes truly **temperate in all Things*, and superiour to all Opposition; his Enemies now flee before him, being weary of seeing and resisting so much Bravery; and though perhaps, through their unwearied Malice, and his own remaining unskilfulness in this most difficult *Game*, he may be sometimes still thrown down in his

* Πάντα ἐγκρατεύσθαι] Besides the sense of our English Translation which seems to respect chiefly temperance in Meats, and the vertue of Continencc or Chastity, the word ἐγκρατεύσθαι is very capable of signifying a constancy of Mind in abstaining, from whatever is prejudicial to Piety; so in Hesychius, ἐγκρατήσθαι, is κρατερῆσθαι, to hold out or endure; and may, fourthly, be expounded πάντα ἐν καρτῇ ἔχειν, the getting all Temptation into his Power, the becoming superior to all sinful Desires. Ibid. Not. h.

Race, and receive grievous Blows and Bruises, yet he soon rises again with Resolution, crying out, *I care for nought but to win my intended Prize*, and, with these words in his mouth, *he presses forward*, with fresh vigour, towards his much-loved *Mark*, and having fought his good Fight, * *not as uncertainly*, or as one that beateth the Air, that is, not in an ignorant or fruitless manner, but skilfully, and with Effect, he, at length, triumphantly (Heaven it self stepping in to the assistance of such deserving Gallantry) † *through much Sweat*, and great *Toils*, ‡ *lays hold of his Crown*.

Such is the End of truly Religious Fasting! Which

* The δολότης, or certainty spoken of (1 Cor. ix. 26.) refers to the plainness of the Race-Ground amongst the Grecians, shewing where, and how far every Racer was to run, so that unless a Man winked he could not but see his way perfectly; and also to the assurance of overcoming if he did but perform regularly: Ἀδηλία & ἄγνοια uncertainty and ignorance being all one in Hesychius, Ibid. Not. k.

† Multa tulit fecitque—sudavit & alfit.

‡ The Reward or Prize proposed to the Racers was called βραβεῖον or ἄθλον; the first in respect of the βραβευτής, that adjudged the Prize to the Winner, the second in respect of the ἄθλητής who received it, and which he was said λαμβάνειν, or ἐπιλαμβάνειν (to receive or obtain) from his catching the Crown or ἄθλον from the top of the Goal. Ibid. Not. l.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, Is very profitable for the averting any *Judgments* hanging over our Heads, or removing them when fallen upon us; also in times of *Spiritual Desertion*, and any season of *Affliction* or *Adversity* (which is a sort of the *Bridegrooms departing from us*) for the disposing God to be merciful again, and to restore his Comforts to us. All good Men and Nations have found it true, what a kind regard God Almighty was wont to shew to their pious Humiliations, to be moved by them to pardon their Sins and remove their Sorrows. The *Ninevetes* when threatned with sudden Destruction by the Prophet *Jonah*; *Jehosaphat* and his people when distressed by the *Ammonites*; and the *Jews* when in great danger by *Haman*, had all recourse to the Remedy of solmn *Fasting* and *Prayer*, and thereby averted the impending Evils: And, for particular Persons who found much Benefit this way, *the time would fail me to tell of David, Ezra, Esther, Nehemiah* also and *Daniel*, who, through Religious *Fasting wrought Righteousness*, found *Deliverance* from Enemies, changed the *Decrees* of Princes, *raised up the Walls* that were thrown down, obtained a
gracious

Jonah iij.

4.

2 Chron.

x.

Esth. 3,

Ec.

gracious return from Captivity, with promises of Good Things to come: nay, wicked *Ahab* himself, because he put sackcloth on his Flesh and went softly, and humbled himself before God, obtained that some dreadful Judgments denounced against him and his House should not be brought upon them in his own Days. From which Examples we may be abundantly instructed concerning the Power and Efficacy of solemn Fasting, and how very profitable it is to address our selves to Almighty God by Fasting and Prayer, when we or the Publick lie under any * Spiritual or Temporal Evils; which (as I before intimated) is a kind of the Bridegrooms departing from us.

But, *Fourthly*, whether we are in any present Affliction, or no, or whether all things go smoothly with us, yet Christ's withdrawing his visible Presence from

* Όταν δ' ἀρῇ ἀπ' αὐτοῦ ὁ Νυμφίος Χεῖρας εἰς ἁμαρτίαν ὀλιθίσαντος, τότε νηστεύει καὶ μετανοεῖ, ἵνα τὴν ἁμαρτίαν ἴδωται: When Christ, the Bridgroom, shall be taken from him, for his being fallen into Sin; then he fasts and repents that he may heal his Sin. *Theoph. on Mark ij.*

The time of God's judging or punishing us for our Sins, is, (says Bp Gunning) in too full a sense, the Bridegroom's departing from us. *Vid. Lent-Fast. pag. 15, 16.*

Cant. j. 2,
&c.

his Church, is Occasion enough, ever after, to make his true Disciples contented sometimes to neglect their *natural Food* to seek Him, and by holy Meditation to converse spiritually with Him in whom their Soul delighteth. The Church before Christ's Coming expressed her Longings for his personal Appearance in such passionate strains of Affection, as those we meet with in that *Song of Songs* which was Solomon's, written in a Pastoral stile, *Let him kiss me with the Kisses of his Mouth; for thy Love is better than Wine: Tell me, O thou whom my Soul loveth, where thou feedest, where thou makest thy Flock to rest at noon: A Bundle of Myrrh is my Well-beloved unto me: I will rise now and go about the City, in the Streets, and in the broad Ways I will seek Him, whom my Soul loveth: And to those who askt, What her Beloved was more than another Beloved, that she sought so after him; She readily replies, My Beloved is white and ruddy, the Chiefest among ten Thousand; His Mouth is most sweet, yea he is altogether Lovely; And thus concludes her Love-Song, Make hast, my Beloved, and be thou like to a Roe, or a young Hart upon the Mountains of Spices.*
Thus

Thus the Faithful who lived before Christ, wished for his Appearance, from an Opinion of his most comfortable excellent Graces: And can we, who know him to be come and gone, and have heard so much of his inimitable Life, and tasted the sweet savour of his Doctrine, and been comforted with his Promises of Pardon, Peace, and Paradise to penitent Sinners, can we, I say, have a less sense of the Excellency of this *Desire of all Nations*, or, knowing Him, can we be indifferent about becoming better acquainted with Him, and enjoying that Spiritual Commerce, which he so graciously offers? And, since our communication with Christ, is, after our best Endeavours used, so imperfect in this Life, can we forbear beseeching him often in the Words of the Church, *to hasten his Kingdom?* And if, for such Ends as these, we cannot at certain times, deny our selves our usual Repast, we shew our selves unworthy the Name of Christians, and to want a due love and regard to our Saviour, who, for our sakes submitted *to fast forty Days and forty Nights*, who shed his most precious Blood for our Redemption, and is infinitely worthy our perpetual Remembrance.

C Fifthly,

2 Cor. xj.
27.

2 Cor. vj.
4. 5.

Fifthly, I might further recommend and press this Duty from the Practice of Christ and his Apostles, whose Esteem of it we may learn sufficiently from their being in *Fastings often*, and *approving themselves as the Ministers of God by Fastings*, as well as other Christian Duties: As also from their making this the usual preface to the *Imposition of Hands*, and the unwillingness they shew'd to enterprize any thing of Moment, *nisi a jejuniis incipiendo*, unless the Work were before *sanctified by holy Fasting*: And again I might enforce the Observance from this particular Argument, that the *Spirit of Fornication* may well be resolved to be one of those *kinds*, which is not to be cast out but by *Prayer and Fasting*; * (*this Kind can come forth by nothing but by Prayer and Fasting*) but may effectually be subdued by this Means, as that even of the Poet admonishes, *sine Cerere & Baccho friget Venus*, *withdraw but Corn and Wine* (those *Belly-Deities*) and *lust or incontinent Desires* will soon grow cold and languish: But, having been large

* Acriona (diriora) Dæmonia non nisi Oratione & jejuniis superantur. S. Hier. Ado. Jovinian. Lib. 2.

Of Christian Fasting.

35

already, I shall insist at present, but upon one Use more; and that is, that *Almsgiving*, or a dedicating of something out of our Store to charitable Uses, being to be looked on as a necessary part of our *Fasting*, and we being also by the denying our selves our ordinary Provisions the better enabled to lay by something in Charity, we shall come by this Means to be never unprovided of a Stock for the relief of the Poor, out of what we thus spare from our own Expences: and this would be agreeable to the Advice St. Paul gives the *Corinthians* for the relieving the wants of the Brethren; *Now concerning the collection for the Saints, as I have given order to the Churches of Galatia, even so do ye; upon the first Day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God has prospered him.* And though this was a particular Case, yet since there will be always Poor to be relieved and Objects of our Charity, and Charity remain still a Duty, if we were diligent in the observance of *Christian Fasting*, and as that Duty requires, took occasion at every return of our stated *Fasts*, to set aside some small matter for charitable purposes, as we should never

¹Cor. xvj.

^{1, 2.}

want a Fund for the necessities of the Indigent, so we should also consult our own ease in the manner of Giving (to which, perhaps, we are not alwaies the most inclined) since we should now only dispose of that which we were willing to part with, as having devoted it to that very Use. And having engaged in this Method, we need not doubt, *but that he who ministreth seed to the Sower, and is able to make all Grace abound towards us, would so multiply the Seed sown* (what we give, I mean in Charity) *that we always having sufficiency in all things, might abound to every good Work.* The incomparable † Dr. Hammond, as we read in his Life, devoted the Tenth of all his Revenue to the Corban, or Poor Man's Box, whereby he became constantly provided for the good Work of Charity, and had also the satisfaction of knowing (even for the present) when he relieved the Wants of any, that he did not become one whit the poorer for his Gift, having only the Content of giving, and the ease of being rid of another Man's Money, (as he esteemed those devoted Sums to be.) 'Tis related also of the same great Man, That he compleated his weekly Fasts with the Addition

† See his
Life by Bp.
Fell.

dition of Alms; and 'tis recorded (as his own Observation) for the use of Posterity, that he himself often professed to wonder at the strange and providential supplies of his Estate.

But to hasten:

The Sum of what has been said, is, (besides manifold other Ends and Uses of holy *Fasting*) that without a careful observance of this Duty, for the sake of considering seriously and often all the parts of our Christian Profession, and suffering them to take deep and lasting Root in our Hearts, we can never become so much affected with our Religion as we ought to be, *nor bring forth fruit with Patience*: nor can we ever fit our selves for a successful Performance of all the Stages of our Christian *Race*, unless by frequent *Retirement*, and *Abstraction* from the World, and conforming our selves to all necessary Rules and Orders, (with the ancient *Olympick Combatants*) we prepare our selves for so great a Work.

I should now proceed (according to my design) to shew the *Measures*, and *Manner* of true *Christian Fasting*, in

which the right Observance thereof does so much consist; but notwithstanding the mighty Importance of this Duty, and also the Truth of what St. *†* Basil affirms, that *†* Repentance without Fasting is but an idle Business, I fear I have already said more than many of us can easily digest, and therefore I shall end this Discourse with a Prayer;

† Μενύοις
† Χρῆς νηστ-
† ας ἀγν. S.
 Bas. Sermon.
 1. de Je-
 jun.

O Lord, who for our sakes didst fast 40 Days and 40 Nights, give us Grace to use such Abstinence, that our Flesh being subdued to the Spirit, we may ever obey thy godly Motions in Righteousness and true Holiness, to thy Honour and Glory, who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Ghost, one God, World without end. Amen.

DISCOURSE II.

ST. MATTH. vj. 16.

*Moreover, when ye Fast, be
not as the Hypocrites---*

I Am now to shew the *Measures*, and *Manner* of Christian *Fasting*: For both which, this Text gives me fair Occasion; those Words [*when ye fast*] leading me to the *Measures* of this Duty, of which the *Times* of observing it are a principal part: And *be not as the Hypocrites* (which, in one essential Particular, instructs us how we shou'd behave our selves on our *Fasting Days*) directing to the *Manner* of its Performance.

I begin with the *Measures* of this Duty, which respect chiefly the *Times* of observing it, and the *Degree* of Fasting in those times.

1. The *Times* for Christian Fasting, appointed by no less Authority than that of the Church (grounding her self herein on very primitive Practice; if

not on that of the Apostles themselves) are these which follow; *Every Friday* in the Year; (except *Christmas-day* fallson a *Friday*;) the *Eves* of many of the Holy-days; the three *Rogation-days*; *three Days* in each of the four *Ember Weeks*; and the *Forty Days of Lent*: To which I may add all *Publick Fasts* enjoyn'd by the State (whether those be of perpetual Obligation, as the *Fast* on *January 30th* stands at present, or only Occasional, and appointed for a Day, or more, as in times of War, Pestilence, &c.) This is the plentiful provision which our good Mother the CHURCH of ENGLAND has piously and carefully allowed, in this sort of Bounty, for the Spiritual Benefit of her Children. In which yet she has manifested her wonted *Moderation* in not appointing near that number of *Fasting Days* which are kept in the Eastern Church, where they observe many more than we do.

To give some account of these Days, or the Reason of their Appointment.

Every Friday in the Year (excepting as before) is by the Piety of the Church separated for a Day of holy *Fasting*, because on that Day of the Week the Saviour of the World, the Eternal Son
of

of God, by a never-enough to be admired Condescension and Sacrifice, suffer'd Death on the Cross: With Respect to which most precious, but most amazing Sacrifice, the primitive Christians kept † the *Wednesday* and *Friday* of every Week in this manner *holy*; because the *Jews* resolved on *Wednesday* to deliver Christ to Death, and *Judas* took money to betray Him; And, on *Friday*, He was Crucified. In which Days therefore they had their Devotions, called ‡ *Stations*; (from their *keeping close* to them) which lasted till * 3 of the Clock in the Afternoon, at

† Called *Jejunia quartæ & sextæ Feriæ*, the Fasts of the fourth and sixth Days of the Week; and also the Weekly Passion-Days.

Cur autem quartâ Feriâ jejuna Ecclesia, illa ratio reddi videtur, Quod, considerato Evangelio, ipsâ quartâ Sabbati (quam vulgò quartam Feriam vocant) concilium reperiuntur ad occidendum Dominum fecisse Judæi. St. Aug. Ep. 86.

And *Friday*, or the sixth Day of the Week is for ever kept holy, Quia Feriâ sextâ crucifixus est Salvator, (as another speaks,) Because on that Day Christ was crucified.

‡ In allusion to the Military Term that signifies Keeping Guard, (Tert. de Orat. c. 14.) or rather (perhaps) from the Jewish Custom of assisting at the Oblations of the Temple with Prayer and Fasting on certain Days, till the Service was over: which Attendance was called A Station, and the Persons chosen to be present at it The Men of the Station. Vid. Disc. concerning Lent, pag. 21 and 29. And Lightfoot of the Temple-Service, ch. 7. par. 3.

* This called antiently Νῆστια τῆς ἑννῆς, or, The Fast of the ninth hour, kept till that time. Because then Christ Expired. Venit enim horæ Nonæ Observatio de
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which time, they received the *Eucharist*, and then returned home. In imitation of which most pious Practice, our Church at this Day, though, making use of her discretion, she has thought fit to forbear the Ordering one of these Days to be kept *fast*, (perhaps in regard to our Climate, or *the growing cold* of Men's Love,) has yet ordained the *Friday* in every Week, to be set apart for the Business of *Fasting*; and also in her 15th Canon hath taken care particularly to enjoin, *That Minister and People, shall resort weekly on Wednesdays, and Fridays to Church, at the accustomed hour to the performance of Divine Service.*

The † *Eves* of a good number of the Holy-days are ordered to be kept

Exitu Domini; (says Tertullian:) Itaque in eam usque horam celebranda pressura est, in qua à sextâ contenebratus, Orbis defuncto Domino lugubre fecit Officium; ut tunc & nos revertamur ad jucunditatem, cum & Mundus recepit claritatem. Lib. de Jejun. cap. 10.

These Stationary Fasts were, however, observed sub arbitrio, non ex imperio, or, quasi passivè currentia, non sub Lege Præcepti, of free Devotion, that is, and not by strict Injunction, (as the Church professed by the acknowledgment of the same Tertullian.) Vid. Bp. Gunning of Lent-Fast, pag. 15.

† Called *Anteferiales Vigiliæ* These Vigils were introduced by the Agreement of Bishops, and allowed by the Good-will of Princes; but, on inconvenience found in the antient Night-service and Watches, (and through the wicked-
fasting,

fasting, in memory of the principal Saints, that we may be reminded to bless God for their pious Lives and useful Labours, and by meditating on their extraordinary Graces and the Reward of their Faith, be moved by them, to endeavour, as far as we are able, to transcribe their Copies of holy Living and constant Suffering for the Truth; Or else, by a greater Occasion, be induced to acknowledge the infinite Mercies of God in those amazing Vouchsafements of the *Incarnation* of his Only Son, his *Passion, Death, Resurrection, Ascension*, and the *Mission* of the Holy Ghost; such blessed Festivities as are, surely, highly worthy a Christians serious Regard and Contemplation on every Return.

The Fast of † the three *Rogation-*

ness of later Times,) became by the Churches Wisdom converted from proper Vigils into semi-plena Jejunia, or lesser Fasts. Vid. Ibid. Append. pag. 437.

The Eves of Saints Days were made Fasts, in imitation of the one more ancient and most Solemn Vigil, the Eve of Easter, called τὸ ἄγιον ἔμψυχον Σάββατον. Ibid.

St. Jerom speaks of several Days kept (in his time) in several Countries, in honour of Martyrs, Pro varietate Regionum diversa in honorem Martyrum tempora constituta; (as his words are.) In Epist. ad Gal. cap. 3.

† Begun at first by Mamertus, Bishop of Vienna, about the Year 490. and accepted soon after by most Bishops and Churches in the West. Paschal or Lent Fast, pag. 436.

days

days are very conveniently placed immediately before the *Ascension*, both to prepare us for that high Festival, and also, by admonishing us to pray for a Blessing on the Fruits of the Earth, which are then in a critical posture, thereby to shew us our entire dependance on God for Temporal Blessings, and that Second Causes are wholly in his Disposal.

Jejunium
primi
Mensis.
Jejunium
Penteco-
stes.
Jejunium
septimi
Mensis.
Jejunium
decimi
Mensis.

The Fasts of * the four *Ember Weeks* (commonly called † *quatuor Tempora*, or *Jejunia quatuor Temporum*) are grounded, in general, on the Apostles *fasting* before their *Ordinations*; and very wisely disposed in the four several Quar-

* Amongst the Original Apostolical Church-Fasts, and such as from the beginning were of Universal Practice, as delivered from the Apostles by Tradition of Precept, (and not of Council only) Bishop Gunning reckons the Fasts of the Church before her Ordinations, though for the Time of the Year wherein those Ordinations shou'd be celebrated, the Church was (from the first) left to her own Discretion. L. F. Append. p. 438.

† Ideò cum dierum temporumque curriculis sine cessatione reparantur (Jejunia;) ut infirmitatum nostrarum ipsa nos Medicina commoneat. Leo. Serm. 7. de Jejun.

And again, Ita per totius Anni circulum distributa sunt (Jejunia) ut lex Abstinentiæ omnibus sit ascripta temporibus: siquidem jejunium vernum in Quadragesimâ, Æstivum in Pentecoste, Autumnale in Mense septimo, Hyemale autem in hoc qui est decimus, celebratur. In Serm. 8. de Jejun.

ters of the Year, to teach us that there is no time which ought not to be employ'd in doing of good Works: And, to be more particular; 1. That *Ember* appointed after the *first Sunday in Lent*, seems to be fixed there amongst other Reasons, to help to carry on the design of that famous *Spring-fast*: 2. That in *Whitsun-week*, besides the end of the *Ordination*, was intended to procure that the Graces then bestowed, by the virtue of the holy Mysteries, may be preserved by those Means: 3. That in *September*, over and above the principal Meaning, is said to have been instituted at that time to give God thanks for the Fruits of the Earth, just then gather'd in, and both to remind and enable us to bestow a portion of them to the Poor, by abstaining from them our selves: And the last after *December* the 13th, being alwaies in the time of *Advent*, and just before *Christmas*,

So that punctually (says Bp. Gunning) the same four *Ember-weeks*, or *Fasts*, and the *Ordinations* solemnized therein, are observed in the four self same Seasons and appointed Times, in this Church of England, which were in the Church more than 1200 Years since. *Paschal. Fast. Append. p. 440.*

Those four *Ember-seasons* are thus contrived, and expressed for Memories-sake; The *Wednesday. Friday, and Saturday* next A *Cruce*, post *Cineres*, post *Pentecos*, atque *Luciæ*.

is very happily placed by an occasional enjoined Devotion, to dispose us the better to receive and the more acceptably to celebrate the *Nativity* of our LORD.

The Fast of *Lent*, or the Forty-season, called antiently the *Antepaschal Fast*, or *Paschale Jejunium*, instituted in allusion (as is thought) to the *forty Days* appointed for the Deluge; *forty Stripes* for Malefactours; *Elijah's* fasting *forty Days*, when flying from *Jezebel*, and the wrath of God impending over *Israel*; to the *Ninevites* being allowed *forty Days* for their Repentance; the *Israelites* doing Penance *forty Years* in the Wilderness; and to our Blessed Saviour's fasting *forty Days and forty Nights*; was designed by the Wisdom of the Church, as for the benefit of all Christians, that in that Spring-season, when the Humours are most stirring, they may, by a well timed Abstinence, check the first-motions and occasions of Sin; and also by a series of Devotion and holy Practice fit and prepare themselves for a more full and awful perception of the Great Mysteries of the Passion and Resurrection; So particularly for the Service
of

of those who have Occasion to deprecate any great or heavy Judgment, or who want any long Space of time for the mortifying and removing any inveterate Habits of Sin; the Church well knowing that, as old and putrid Ulcers are not wont to be cured by a Plaister laid on for a few Days; so spiritual Maladies are not quickly remedied, *a new Heart and a new Spirit* is not presently attained, but there is need of a long course of publick and private Devotion, with many Tears and Austerities, before the *Patient* can obtain the pardon of his Sins, and God's holy Spirit.

The *Fasting Days* of the State or *Civil Power*, being appointed as the publick Occasions and Exigencies require, are religiously to be observed by all, by virtue of that Command, *Obey those that have the Rule over you*, and as the Authority that enacts them do's commonly enjoyn.

And these are the *Measures* of *Fasting*, as to the Times, or *Days* of observing that Duty, with the Reasons of their Institution.

Asto the *Measure*, or Degree of Abstinence to be observed on those *Fasting*

ing Days; no certain or universal Rule can be laid down, since this Matter is to be regulated according to the various Wants, and capacities of the Persons concern'd: Some need not to *fast* at all, as the Sick, Aged Persons, Travelers, Young Children, and the like; and amongst those who do want it, and are obliged to perform it, more of this Duty is required of some than of others: But the † old *Catholick* Way was to abstain from all manner of Food (both Meat and Drink) till the Evening, and then to take only a moderate repast of some plain ordinary Fare: This was esteemed a *true and perfect Fast*, as to the *Quantity* taken; and this may, doubtless, be practised very profitably by many. Let us therefore here apply those words of our Saviour, *Qui potest capere, capiat, He that can receive it*, (and more especially if he wants it for the punishing any past Sin, or rectifying any vitious Habit) *let him receive it*.

Yet, it cannot be denied, an accept-

† *The Antients simplicity (in Fasting) required a deferring of the Hour, a diminution of the Quantity, an abatement of the Quality of their usual daily refreshment. Lent Fast. pag. 191.*

able *Fast* there may be without this total Abstinence. The Charity of the Church is great; and God's Mercies are infinite. The Church intends the Good of her Members in all her Injunctions; and God Almighty, we know, ^{St. Matt^e ix, 13.} prefers *Mercy* to *Sacrifice*: Whoever, therefore, making a sincere and conscientious Judgment in the Case, shall resolve that his Health, or the State of his Body cannot bear a total Fast, or to *abstain* till Night, shall be accepted if he eats sooner, suppose about 3 in the Afternoon, (the time that the ancient Christians generally broke up their *Stations*;) And those who cannot hold out so long, will yet be reckoned to pay a just regard to the Duty, if, in eating, they deny their Appetites their full Satisfaction, or else, chuse what is least agreeable to the Palate: And, withall, if when they do eat, they take care to do it as privately and with as little *offence* as may be.

For these sorts of *Fasts* there is a Name in Antiquity, they were called † *Half-fasts*; and this variety of *Fasts* † ^{Semi-jejunia.} and receding from the strict Rule, gave occasion to *Tertullian's* distinction of *Fasts* into 1. Refusing; 2. Deferring;
D and

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† The Reverend Bp. Patrick thinks the Fast-Days of our Church might be called Days of Fasting or Abstinence, to include both Sorts, Total and partial. Vid. Treatise of Fasting.

and 3. Lessening of Food: As also to another Division of them into Abstinence *à Toto*, *à Tanto*, and *à Tali*; i. e. into a † *total forbearance* of all manner of Sustenance whilst the *Fast* lasts; a *lessening* or abridging the *Quantity* of what we eat; or 3dly, a denying our selves in the *Quality* of our Food, eating, that is, not what is most pleasant to the Appetite, but of Meats the least delicate. And they who *fast* in these lower Senses, only because they cannot bear the higher Degrees, will be allowed by the God of Mercies to regard the Duty, and to have a title to the Reward of true *Fasters*; whilst they who (being able) observe none at all, will remain *without Excuse*.

Let me here, however (of Love) wish that all, who through Health are any ways able, wou'd make their *Fast* total, taking no kind of thing before the Evening, (no hard matter to practise;) because the breaking our *Fast*, in any degree, do's also in some measure dissipate our hopes and confidence of receiving the *Reward* promised. And

Thus much for the Measures of Fasting.

For

For the Manner of performing this Duty, suggested in those words, *Be not as the Hypocrites*, take the following Directions.

1. That there is no true Religious *Fasting* without *Mourning*, our Saviour shewed when, to the *Pharisees* asking Him, *Why his Disciples fasted not*, He answered, *The Children cannot mourn*^{15.} whilst the *Bridegroom* is with them: Which shou'd instruct us, that our *Fasting Day* is to be in some measure a *Day of Sorrow and Humiliation*; and though *Sackcloth* and *Ashes* need not be used by us as they were by the *Jews* (being an *Eastern Custom*) yet, on many Occasions, we shou'd express the same, as near as we can, by neglecting to adorn our Bodies in private, by retiring from Company, lamenting the death or danger of our Souls, and the loss of God's Favour, in as humble a Manner as possible; and exercising our selves in Sorrow, Shame, and Self-abhorrence for what we have done amiss.

2. We must not yet affectedly † put on

† Χαῖρε ἐν νηστείᾳ, καὶ μὴ σύγραψε, ὡς οἱ ὑποκρίται. St. Chrys: πρὸς νηστείαν λόγ. α'.

Ἰπποδρόμου τὸ γαλάνιον ἐν ἡμέρῃ τῆς νηστείας ὄρεμα. Id. λόγ. * 2. tom. 6.

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any such *mournful Looks*, or *sordid Dress*, as may signify that *we fast to be seen of men*; since this is the pharisaical condemned fashion of *hypocritical Persons*, who desire the *Praise and Favour of Men*, which is all *their reward*; but we must appear on our *Fasting-days* in our ordinary Guise, and so as that we be sure to do nothing purposely to † reveal our *Fasting*.

3. Those who are able, must not think to make their *Fast* consist in a *Commutation* only of their usual Diet for other as delightful Refreshment (a piece of *Hypocrisy*, which, as we are credibly informed, prevails much in the *Roman Church*;) but we must make our *Fast* truly a *Fasting*, *i. e.* a *Punishment* and *Humiliation* of the Soul.

4. Neither when we *Fast* must we think it enough merely to *afflict our Souls*, and *bow down the head like a bulrush*; unless

† Pestilentia hypocriscos fugienda, quæ de remediis creat Morbos, conficit de Medicinâ languorem, sanctitatem vertit in crimen, placationem facit reatum, generat de propitiatione discrimen. *Chrysol. Serm. 7. in Matt. 6.*

Hypocrisis crudeli arte Jejunium jejunio perimit.

Hypocrisis dum cupit captivare oculos, oculis fit ipsa captiva. *Ibid.*

we also busy our selves as much as we can in works of *Mercy* and *Charity*, such as relieving the Poor out of what we deny to our selves, *loosing the bands* Ifai. lviii. *of wickedness, relieving the oppressed,* ^{6.} reconciling our selves to our Enemy, and the like. And here I can't forbear inserting some excellent Words of St. *Chrysostom* to this purpose, who, in one of his Homilies, thus discourses; † “He ^{+ Vid. Du Pin, Vol. 3. p. 42.} “ offers an injury to *Fasting* (says that “ Great Father) who defines it to be “ an *Abstinence* from Meats only; for “ *Fasting* respects not the Mouth barely, but the Ears, Hands, Feet, and “ all other parts of the Body: Covetous, or pilfering Hands must *fast*, and “ touch no more other Mens Goods; “ the Feet must *fast*, and run no more to “ profane Shews; and the Eyes shou'd “ *fast* by turning aside from a dangerous “ Beauty*: Again, we must shew our “ *Fasting* as our Faith, by our Works: “ If you ask me what Works? I require, says St. *Chrysostom*, that when “ you see a poor Man, you be sure to “ help him in his Misery; that you

* This Fasting not from Meats only, but from Sin, St. *Chrysostom* somewhere calls *ἡ ἀνεστὶν ὁσίων*, The accurate Fast.

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“ reconcile your self to your Enemy;
 “ and that you avoid the sight of a
 “ handsome Woman. And, in the 22
 “ Homily, There may be several rea-
 “ sons not to *fast*, but there is none for
 “ not correcting a vicious Habit: You
 “ have broken your *fast* because of a
 “ bodily Infirmary; Well: But, why do
 “ you not forgive your Enemy? Is
 “ there any Corporal Indisposition in
 “ that? And, in another place, Then
 “ indeed we have reason to rejoyce,
 “ when by this Discipline (*of Fasting*)
 “ we have corrected one Vice, or
 “ gained one Vertue; and by our *Ab-*
 “ *stinence* from Meat improved our In-
 “ ward Man.

§. When we *Fast* for our Sins we must
 * *proportion* the measure of our Humi-
 liation, to the degree of our Guilt.
 Heinous Offenders must not imagine
 that their Deep Stains will be so easily
 purged, as the flighter faults of less
 presumptuous Sinners. The *Fast* of
 the *Lapsed* anciently, were truly an
Affliction; they *fasted and watched*
groaned and wept to the Lord their

* True Repentance (as S. Basil expresses it) is *καὶ ὡς*
ἀναλογεῖται τῇ μεγέθει τῆς ἁμαρτίας. Hom. in Psal. 114.

God, and beg'd of others to pray for them: And thus it will well become all notorious Transgressours to do, remembering what the Angel is represented to tell *Hermas* (in that part of his Book entituled, *The Visions*) viz.
 " That the Sins of the Penitent are
 " not presently blotted out; but that
 " he who is a Penitent must afflict his
 " Soul, and behave himself humbly in
 " all he has to do, and endure many
 " and grievous Vexations, that when
 " he has suffered much then God may
 " have Mercy on him.

6. We should alwaies in our *Fasts* have some regard, to the particular Occasion of them, as whether it be a *Saint* that we are to remember, or a *Mercy* to acknowledge, a *Sin* to mortify, or a *Judgment* to deprecate; and be sure to mix something of the especial Matter of our *Fast* with our Devotion.

7. We must also in our *Fasts*, be very careful, as to avoid all **boasting* of our Performances, so to forbear despising others who conform not exactly to

† Reprehendenda jejunii jaetantia. S. Hieron.

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our own Measures, and by no means to break Charity on this account, since there was ever a great and allowed Diversity in observing this Duty amongst *Christians*, and perhaps others have not so much need of *Fasting* as we our selves have.

8. Again to our *Fasting*, which is supposed to be attended with the Sacrifice of *Prayer*, let us remember to join * *Alms*; *Fasting*, and *Alms* together, being the wings on which holy *Prayer* certainly mounts to Heaven.

9. We must have a care of concluding our *Fast*, with † *a luxurious Supper*, which would represent us weary of our Devotion, and insensible of the Benefit that attends it; and therefore let us (as One speaks) *beware of falling short of the price and reward that belongs to true Fasting, by learning perfectly to practise it holily.*

* Jejunium sine Eleemosynâ lampas sine oleo.

† Spernitur Jejunium quod vespere deliciis compensatur. *Turtul.*

Neque leve peccatum est Jejunia consecrata ventris voracitate dissolvere. *S. Ambr. Serm. 25.*

Be Fasting how little a thing soever, yet 'tis no small danger to mock God, who observes that to which he has promised an open Reward, Bp. Gunning. Lent-Fast. p. 187.

And

10. And lastly, to compleat our *Fast*, we should (especially on particular Occasions so requiring) joyn *Watchings*, or *abstinence* from *Sleep* to our other *Humiliation*. I knew * the Generous *Candida* (says *Palladius*) went to labour and toil throughout the whole Night, for the taking down the force of her Body, declaring that since *Fasting* did not suffice, she was resolved to call in the aid of laborious *Watching*. And these two united seem a Match for the strongest Lust.

11. I am sorry I have so much reason to add, that to make the *Manner* of our *Fasting* acceptable, we must joyn *Justice* with it, and not make it a *Fasting* for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of *Wickedness*, as the blood thirsty Conspiratours against the Life of St. Paul did; and as we have too lately had too many such *Fasts* and *Humiliation-Days* in this unhappy Land.

And this I hope may serve to inform us about the *Manner* of *Fasting* or those other *Laws* of this Duty, of

* Ταύτην τὴν γενναίαν οἶδον — ἐν καὶ ἀγρυπνίᾳ τῆς τοῦ σώματος ἀνιδρωσίας. *Pallad.*

which

which * St. Chrysostom says, *Let us learn the laws of Fasting, how we ought to Fast that we run not uncertainly, nor beat the Air, nor fight with a shadow whilst we fast.*

Those amongst us who are offended with the Number of our *Fast-Days*, and particularly at the *40 Days of Lent*, would do well to consider the Practice of the *Jews* in this Respect, whose promises of Earthly Plenty rendered *Fasting* less suitable to them than to *Christians*, who are by their Religion more especially directed to look for their Happiness in a future Spiritual State. The *Jews* however as we learn (being sensible of the Necessity of *Abstinence* for the leading an holy Life, and also of the acceptableness of it to God) prescribed themselves Days of private *Fasting*, some once, some twice, some oftner every Week: † *Mon-*

* Μαζωμεν τῆς νηστείας τὸς Νόμους, ἵνα μὴ τρέχωμεν ἀδύλας, μηδὲ εἰς ἄερα δίδωμεν, μηδὲ σκιάμα χῶμεν νηστεύοντες, S. Chrysost. Hom. 3. ad Popul. Antioch.

Οὐ γὰρ ἀρκεῖ τῆς νηστείας φύσις ἐξελεῖσθαι ἁμαρτίας. For the Nature of Fasting sufficeth not to free Men from Sin; But the doing it, μετὰ τῷ προσήκοντι Νόμῳ, according to a meet Rule or Law. Ibid.

† On the former [Monday] because on that Day Moses had gone up from them into the Mount: the latter and

day and Thursday were their common Fasting Days: In imitation whereof, as is probable, and not merely with respect to our Saviour's Passion, the Primitive Christians kept Wednesday and Friday holy, not imagining that less Religion was required under the Gospel than under the Law. We of the Church of England have only Friday in every Week appointed to be kept Fasting. Blush then, O Christian, who art displeased at the Weekly Christian Fast. The Jews had also the Fast on the 10th Day of the 7th Month appointed by God himself; they had moreover the Fasts of the 4th, 5th, 7th, and 10th Months Established by their Governours.

Zech. viij.
19.

That Ancient People of God afford us farther some Pattern of our Christian Lent: Our Holy Week being but agreeable to their 7 Days of Extraordinary Preparation for their Passover; and their beginning 40 Days before to prepare themselves for that Great Day, answering, in no small degree, to our Quadragesimal Season. Thus is our whole Lent, and Weekly Fast, or Fasts,

[Thursday] because on that Day Moses returning down from the Mount brake the Tables of God for their Sin. Bp. Gunning. Lent-Fast. p. 18.

tran-

transcribed, as it were, from the parallel line of *Jewish Practice*: Which, one would think, were of its self enough to dispose all angry Opposers of this our holy Institution, to be less offended at it; since so many of our other *Christian Ordinances* are so plainly of *Jewish Extraction*, or grafted on some former *Usages* amongst that People: Whose Resentments might yet be abated, wou'd they calmly weigh, and consider the Usefulness and even Necessity of such a Season for * the most Vicious. *We allow a competent time (says an ancient Father) for the taking out the Spots in our Garments, and shall we not think 40 Days wisely ordained for the changing our Nature (as difficult in a manner as for a Leopard to change his Spots) and for the making us a new Heart and a new Spirit? And again, You who have been busy about the things of the World, troubled in vain many Tears, will ye not (says*

*Dominus enim ostendit nobis tunc nos Diaboli posse esse Victores, cum 40 dies Victores jejunando desideriorum carnalium fuissetis: *For the Lord hath shewed us that then we can overcome the Devil, when by 40 Days we have been through Fasting Victors over our Carnal Desires.*

S. Ambr. Serm. 25.

Acriora Dæmonia docuit Dominus non nisi Oratione & Jejunio posse superari, S. Hieron. lib. 2. adv. Jovian.

St. Cyril)

St. Cyril) *bestow 40 Days for the Salvation of your Souls?* There is something peculiar in this *Fast of Lent* to dispose even the most negligent to *fast* by the advice and exhortation of the Season. 'Tis a loud Call of the Church upon all Men to reform their Lives; and a great Happiness without doubt it is that we have such a solemn Season stated for Recollection and Repentance. And though the licentious, who love no Restraint, are apt to blame this *Ordinance*, yet this holy Season will always be welcome to those who desire to lead Christian Lives: Since in this *Spring-Fast* (as One speaks) *the Garland, not of flowers, but of Spiritual Graces is gathered; and as, at this time, the Husbandman kills the weeds, so do we our Sins, that they being rooted up, and destroyed, we may bring forth fruit unto God.*

If any ask, Whether every private *Christian* is bound to *Fast* all the 40 Days of Lent: I answer in the Words of a very Learned Person, (who has, some time since, obliged the Publick with a * Valuable Treatise on this Subject,) " That the great Variety

* *A Discourse concerning Lent, &c.*

Μεγάλη
εβδομας

Πάσχα
σαυρώσιμον

Τὸ μέγα
Σάββατον.

“ with which this *Fast* was observed
“ in the Ancient Church, is a good
“ Argument that the Church does not
“ oblige her Members strictly to fast
“ the whole 40 Days. The *Holy Week*
indeed (called *Hebdomada Magna*, be-
because then truly great and ineffable
Things were purchased for us) or at
least the * *Good Friday* and *Holy Sa-*
turday in that Week (those *Days* in
which the Lord *was Taken away*,)
if we make a judgment from the Prin-
ciple and Practice of the same Primi-
tive Church is to be *Fasted* by all,
from Apostolical Authority, and as by
Divine Precept. In this Week, the

† *Dies Pasche*] quo quasi communis & publica *Fejesta*
nii religio est. *Tertul*, This is that *μία ἡμέρα*, that one
Day into which the least devout among Christians shrunke
up their Fast, as Bp Gunning observes, meaning their
Lent-Fast. *Vid.* Lent-Fast. p. 31.

Good-Friday] This Day justly stiled ἡ πάνσεπτος ἡ
μέρα, a most venerable Day. *Vid.* Ibid. p. 75.

The very worthy Bp Beveridge looks upon these words of
the Prophet Zechary, chap. xij. 10. — And they shall
mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only Son, and
be in bitterness for him, as one in bitterness for his First-
born, to be intended principally to express the greatness of
that Grief and Mourning, which should be in the Church,
for the Passion of our Blessed Saviour, like that of a Man
that hath lost his only Son, or his First-born, which being
the greatest Loss a Man can suffer, it usually causes the
greatest Sorrow that a Man can shew in the World. *Serm.*
on Good-Friday, to be kept by all Christians, &c.

Strict

Strict wou'd eat nothing but Bread, Water, Salt, or Nuts and Almonds, called the *Dry Diet*, and most devoutly and religiously joyned the Affliction of their Soul with their Lord's bitter Passion. They thought they could do no less than this, were it only to keep pace with the Practice of the *Jews* about their great *Day of Expiation*.

“ Against which † the ancient *Jews*
 “ afflicted their Souls not only by
 “ *Fasting*, but all other demonstrations
 “ of *Penance*. The Day before, they re-
 “ paired to their Synagogues very early
 “ in the Morning, continuing long at
 “ their Devotions, and going afterwards
 “ to their Burying-places for their
 “ greater Humiliation. The Afternoon
 “ they spent in washing their Garments,
 “ confessing their Sins, making ready
 “ their Candles, and particu-
 “ larly in asking Pardon of those they had in-
 “ jur'd, and making them Satisfaction.
 “ After this they began the solemn
 “ Prayers of the *Great Day* in the
 “ Evening before, which they conti-
 “ nued till Midnight, some spending
 “ the whole Night in Devotion and

† Vid. Dis. concerning Lent. &c. pag. 406. &c.

“ reading the Psalter: Before Sun-ri-
 “ sing, however, they came to their
 “ Synagogues again, and staid there
 “ all the rest of the Day in Devotion:
 “ Without this punctual performance
 “ expecting no benefit from that Days
 “ Sacrifice.

The Primitive *Christians* cou'd not think themselves less concerned, for the Anniversary of our Lord's *Passion*, then the *Jews* were about their Great *Day of Atonement*, (a faint type of the Other;) And therefore as the one had their 7 Days Extraordinary Preparation beforehand; so did the *Christians* observe their *Holy Week* with all possible Strictness and Regard. And as the *Jews* eat their Passover with *unleaven'd bread and bitter Herbs*, in remembrance of their *Egyptian Bondage*; so did the *Christians* deny and punish themselves, as much as their Health and Worldly Concerns would permit, that tasting the bitterness of Pain, they might the better apprehend the Benefit of their Deliverance from Eternal Death. They also spent much time in meditating on the Passion of our Lord, *that Basis and Ground-Work of the Church, on which* (as One speaks) *our Salvation stands, a mighty Foundation and Deeply laid;*
 Re-

resolving (says † the same Worthy † Dis. of
Writer) that they should bring too low Lent. pag.
thoughts to that sacred Mystery, did 440.
they not rise up to the Consideration of
it, by the steps and ascents, of some
previous Meditation.

Such was the Grand Occasion for
the *Fast of the Holy Week*, and such
the Observance of it in the Primitive
Church. And this *Fast of the Holy*
or *Passion Week*, or at the least, the
* *Friday* and *Saturday* in that Week,
was (as far as I can learn) all that
portion of *Lent*, which was esteemed
and enjoined as *Necessary Preparation*
to the solemnity of *Easter*; the rest

* For as for the stricter and more rigorous Fast of all the
Six Days in the last Great Week, the Judicious Bishop
Gunning thinks the Observance thereof, hath been ever re-
commended in the Church from the Apostles times, as
Tradition Apostolical, but that in such a Manner as to be
left to the free Choice and Devotion of Christians, and not
as exacted by Apostolical Command; ex arbitrio, non ex
præcepto Apostolorum præstanda. Vid. Paschal or Lent-
Fast, Append. pag. 441.

The *Saturday* before *Easter*, or *Easter Eve*, was called Τὸ
Μεγά Σάββατον by the Oriental Churches throughout all Ages
unto this Day, as an high Fasting-Day, and Vigil, and the
Close of the Paschal-Season. So the Church of Smyrna
giving an Account to other Churches of the Martyrdom of
St. Polycarp, who was put to Death on the *Saturday* be-
fore *Easter*, expresses it to be done ὅτις Μεγάλη Σάββατος.
Vid. Lent-Fast. pag. 452.

E

being

being held *Discretionary*, and to be observed as each *Christian* should think fit in Godly prudence, and as the Condition of his Soul and other Circumstances should direct. Though as the *Jews*, in Imitation of their Great Founder, *Moses*, (who twice fasted 40 Days and 40 Nights) had their 40 *Days* wherein they were, in some degree, to prepare for their approaching Sacrifice; So will all serious *Christians*, if they consider the Matter aright, think it becoming them to express some Religious regard to those Days which follow *Ashwednesday*, the *Wednesdays*, and *Fridays* especially, (*those weekly Passion Days*) by treating them with an holy Distinction; whilst, upon them, they avoid going to publick Diversions, interrupt the frequency of Visits, attend the publick Devotions, spend their Retirements in Spiritual Reading, seeking after Acts of Charity, confessing their Sins to God, making Restitution to Man, acting an holy * Revenge upon themselves for

* In quantum non peperceris tibi, in tantum tibi Deus (crede) parceret; *The more severe you are in judging and avenging your own Faults, the less will God (certainly) punish them; or, the more ready will He be to pardon them.* Tert. de Pœnit. c. 9.

former Excesses, settling purposes of future Obedience, acknowledging Divine Justice, and by all proper Methods, fitting themselves to receive the tokens and pledges of God's Love at *Easter*, with the greater Joy and Gladness. For such right *Christian* purposes was the *Fast of Lent* instituted; * a solemn and large space of Time wherein to strive ourselves, and vie with others for Spiritual Gifts, and which therefore (as the forecited † Author † *Disc. of Lent. pag. ult.* speaks) *those of us who understand will certainly commend, and those who commend should take Care to pursue.*

And as it will well become the Lay-People to conform to this Wholesome Discipline, in the Season proper for it;

* S. Ambrose calls the Lent-Fast, fidele Virtutis certamen, a space for the faithful striving of Vertue. 4th Book on S. Luke.

Ἐάν ὀλίγα κάμῃς, ὀλίγα λαμβάνεις. If thou labour little, thou receivest little, St. Cyril Cateches. 1.

Testis est unicuique Conscientia sua: quia quantò districtius se sanctis his diebus Domino mancipasse meminit, tantò amplius gaudens, sanctum Dominicæ Resurrectionis tempus expectat. Bedæ. Hom. in Domin. Palmarum.

The Observation of holy Fasting in Lent, S. Chrysostom calls τὴν καλὴν ταύτην καὶ ἐπὶ φεαλῇ ὁδοιπορίαν, that good and profitable Travelling. Serm. 16. ad Pop. Antioch.

So the † Clergy will certainly judge themselves concerned to go before, and quicken them in this Duty, by a Leading Example. Those † Acts of *Parliament* made to enjoin *Abstinence from Flesh*, express the Reason thereof to be, not only *on political Accounts*, but also as *a Mean to Vertue and for the subduing the Flesh to the Spirit*; “ The
 “ Formers of them having no doubt
 “ (says Bp *Gunning*) before their Eyes
 “ the approbation of God, and his
 “ gracious Answer to *Daniel*, so cha-
 “ stning himself, as we read in Scri-
 Daniel x. “ ture. Which, that Ministers of God’s
 2. Eccl. “ Word (says he) should not as well
 “ have before their Eyes, as our Civil
 “ Magistrate, is a great shame.

If any religiously curious do still ask how often they should *Fast* at other times besides, and out of *Lent*; Let them hear the Reverend Dr *Hammond*’s
 † *Prac.* Opinion in the Case, (whose sense I
Catech. p. shall collect as well as I can.) And
 263, 264. 1st. “ Supposing at present no posi-

‡ Sicut enim discreta debet esse vita Clericorum a Laicorum conversatione; ita & in Jejunio debet esse discretio. *Zanch.* l. 1. in 4. *Precept.*

† 2 & 3 Edv. 6. c. 19. Anno D. 1549. *It is Ordained by the Authority of Parliament, that no Person or*
 “ tive

“ tive Command for *Fasting*, yet from
 “ the Constitution of the Gospel, which
 “ requires higher Degrees of Purity than
 “ any other Religion ever did, and from
 “ the Nature of Christianity, which
 “ directs *Christians* to aspire to an An-
 “ gelical Life, and Invisible Joys, it
 “ will follow, That for these Reasons,
 “ and upon these Accounts, *Christians*
 “ (as we read that *John's* Disciples
 “ did) should *fast oft*, in Conformi-
 “ ty to the Nature of their Religion,
 “ and for advancing those Spiritual
 “ Ends: 2^{ly}. From the Nature of Sin,
 “ which is so very apt to deceive us,
 “ and run us deep in Guilt and Ruin,
 “ before we are aware, it will appear
 “ highly requisite, and a Duty which
 “ every *Christian* owes to himself, that
 “ he should have his solemn *set Days*
 “ for the calling himself to an Account
 “ for all his Ways, and for particular
 “ Confession of his Sins to God; which

Persons of what Estate, or Condition soever, shall after the
 1st. Day of May ensuing willingly and wittingly eat any
 manner of Flesh, after what sort soever, it shall be ordered,
 dressed, or used, upon any Friday. or Saturday or the Em-
 bring-Days, or on any Day in the Time commonly called
 Lent, &c.

In the Statute of 5. Eliz. 5. Wednesday was superad-
 ded to the the former Fish-Days: Which part of the Statute
 stands repealed by 3. Car. c. 4. Vid. Paschal-Fast. p. 534.

The Measures and Manner

“ Days shou’d not be too slow in their
 “ Returns, lest his Soul be too deep in
 “ Arrears, and so unwilling to come
 “ to Accounts at all; and therefore
 “ one Day in every Week it would be
 “ highly proper for every Person of
 “ leisure to set apart for this Business,
 “ or at least some part of one Day; the
 “ Dinner time especially (which there
 “ is scarcely any but may spare) And
 “ he that useth not some such constant
 “ Course (which yet on * special Oc-
 “ casions may be altered) will be in
 “ great Danger to be found and cen-
 “ sured a Neglector of the Duties of

* Such was that of Spiridion, an Holy Bishop, who ha-
 ving a Stranger come to him much spent with his Journey
 (peregrinū valdè defectum) in those Days of Lent which
 he and his Family used to pass fasting, it being their Cu-
 stom to intermit several Days in that Season from Meat,
 and then upon a set Day to take some refreshment, (instan-
 te jam Quadragesimā, quibus diebus consueverat cum suis
 continuare jejunia, & die certo comedere, medios dies
 sine cibo consistens,) in want of other Provision, he had
 his Daughter get ready some Hogs-flesh, which they had in
 the House salted (carnes porcinas, quas domi salitas ha-
 bebat) and having first prayed pardon of God, they sate
 down to eat. Cassiodor.

With submission to better Judgments, I am here willing
 to add, that altho’, as being highly serviceable to the Ends
 of Religion, and as an Order of the Church, ’tis cer-
 tainly good to observe as many of the prescribed Days of
 Fasting, and that as strictly as we can, yet, the sense of
 the present Church being undoubtedly the same, in the ge-
 neral, with that of the most Ancient Primitive, and it be-

“ a

“ a Disciple of Christ. This is spoken
 “ of *private Fasting*, which (as the
 “ *Jews* had their *voluntary Oblations*
 “ of this kind) is now suppos’d to be
 “ left to the *prudence* of every *Christian*,
 “ and, in Reason, ought to be used
 “ more or less frequently, according
 “ to the various Wants and Occasions
 “ of Men. For *publick Fasting*, the
 “ Directions must be had from the Laws
 “ or Rules of the Place or Church in
 “ which we live; which (says Dr. *Ham-*
 “ *mond*) so far at least oblige every one,
 “ that he offend not against them either
 “ contemptuously or with Scandal.
 And how they can be said not to give
 offence or occasion of Neglect to others,
 who take no notice of the *Weekly-Fri-*
day-Fast, the *Ember*, and *Rogation*
Days, and Eves of *Holydays*, with the
Fast of Lent, the Offenders themselves
 would do well to consider.

ing so evident from the Testimony of Tertullian that the
 First Christians or Catholicks did not esteem themselves o-
 bliged, as of necessity, and by force of Precept, to observe
 any other Days with Strict Fasting, but those only in which
 the Bridegroom was taken away by Death, we need not,
 I suppose, excepting in the most Holy Passion-Week, and
 more especially the Friday and Saturday in that Week, be
 too rigorous or severe about dispensing with any other Fast-
 ing-Day, upon any considerable Cause or Occasion (such as
 that of Spiridion) which may reasonably require such a
 Dispensation.

The Measures and Manner

Let me add, that if the strict observation of the Churches Rules, together with our present *Free-will-offerings* be not sufficient for our purpose, we must *Fast* still more, resolving that we have not done enough till we have subdued our unruly Lusts; And he that wou'd add a Day to the *Churches-Fasts* cannot chuse a better then **Wednesday*, the Day on which the *Jews* resolved to deliver Christ to Death.

I must now speak with some Objectors, who would weaken the Authority of this excellent Duty.

De jejuniis
& Quadra-
gesimâ.

And first with the very learned *Monsr. Daillé*; who to serve an Hypothesis, has endeavoured to depress the Autho-

*And this would be more especially proper, if any one has Occasion to punish and mortify any Sin of Wrong or Injustice, Covetousness, or immoderate Love of the World, according to that of an Ancient, Ὁ γνωσκὼς οἶδεν καὶ τῆς νηστείας τὰ ἀνέγγραφα τῶν ἡμερῶν τέτταρ, τῆς περὰ θ, καὶ τῆς περὰ σκαδὴς. Ἐπιφανεῖς γὰρ ἡ περὰ Ἑρμῆ, ἡ δὲ Ἀφροδίτης. Αὐτῶς νηστεύει κατὰ τὸν βίον φιλαργυρίας καὶ ὁμοῦ ἐν φιληδονίᾳ, i. The truly knowing Person knows the hidden meaning of those two Days, *Wednesday* and *Friday*, whereof the first [*Wednesday*] belongs to Mercury, the Idol-God of Gain; as the other [*Friday*] to Venus, the Heathen Goddess of Pleasure: For he fasts all his life from the love of Money and of Voluptuousness. Clem. Alex. Strom. 7. & Vid. Disc. of Lent. pag. 49. & 65.

city

city of the *Lent-fast*, by allowing it no Being before the Fourth Century. Against whom therefore I am obliged, in defence of Truth, to shew the very Primitive and even Apostolical Right of this *Fast*; that a true and proper *Lent* was practised by the Apostles themselves, and so by their Example at least recommended to the Church. And this I shall make good, 1st. From Reason; and 2^{ly}, from good Warrant of History.

And *First*, Suposing no express Historical Testimony in this matter, we may yet go a great way in collecting, by *Reason* that the Apostles did themselves observe some *Lent*, or *Spring-fast*; by which we mean a *Solemn* Season of Humiliation, attendant on the Death of Christ, and preparatory to the Feast of *Easter*.

I. Because otherwise they wou'd not have complied with the Intimations or Directions of their Lord and Master, who plainly declared to the cavilling *Pharisees*, that, tho' his Chosen Disciples did not practise any such mournful Rites then, whilst He, the Bridegroom of their Souls, was with them (a Season to them of Festival Joy and Entertainment) and whilst also for want of
being

being renewed and strengthened by the Descent of the Spirit, they were (*like old Bottles*) too weak and feeble for the Practice of such difficult Duties, yet *the Days would come, when He, the Bridegroom, should be taken away from them*, when the Solemnity of the present Espousals should be turned into a Funeral Mourning, and then it would be both seasonable for them, and by the Assistances of the Comforter, they should be enabled to *fast*, (*jejunabunt*,) in those days, † *ὁ ἐκείναις ταῖς ἡμέραις*, with an Article of *δείξις*, (says Bishop Gunning) that is, as if he had said, "Then, after my Departure by
 " Death (and the coming of the Holy
 " Ghost) my Disciples shall not come
 " behind-hand with any in the business
 " of *Fasting*: No; they shall approve
 " themselves willing, forward, and ob-
 " servably eminent for the performance
 " of that holy Exercise, using and pra-
 " ctising it on many Occasions, and in

† This Expression is both in St. Mark and St. Luke; nor is the Article *ταῖς* any where omitted, but where *ὁ ἐκείναις* is omitted also; as in St. Matthew. And if the MS. R. reads it in one place, in that Day, as Mark 2d; yet still it is with the Article interposed, *ὁ ἐκείναις τῇ ἡμέρᾳ*. Which reading (says Bp. Gunning) they who follow (as he did not) might well refer it to the Day of Christ's Death and Passion. Vid. Lent-Fast, pag. 20.

" many

" many parts and seasons of the Year;
 " and more especially, punctually, con-
 " stantly, and solemnly every Year a-
 " bout the time of my *Death* and
 " *Passion*. Which being the Meaning
 of our Blessed Saviour in this place
 (taking in also the Parable annexed)
 it is surely highly reasonable to believe
 that the Apostles in compliance with
 such Intimations, if not direct Com-
 mands of their Divine Master, as well
 as from their own Inclinations, wou'd,
 after his Departure, take care to be in
Fastings often, and particularly on every
 Return of the Season of his *Passion*
 (that precise and most literal Time of his
Ἀνάσταναι, or *Taking away*) they would
 exercise some *Set and Solemn Fasting* in
 Memory of his *Death*, and to bewail
 their Loss of him.

Secondly, There is great Reason to
 believe the Apostles wou'd prepare
 themselves for the Feast of *Easter* by
 strict and solemn *Fasting*, that they
 might not seem to pay less Regard to
 that High Festival, than the *Jews* did
 to their *Passover*. That (once) *pecu-*
liar People (as was before observed)
 had always 7 Days Extraordinary Pre-
 paration for their *Paschal Sacrifice*, in
 some of which they afflicted ther Souls
 with

with *Fasting* and all other Acts of Penitence: Which being a most proper and decent Preface to the Memorial of their *Freedom* from *Egyptian* Bondage, 'tis most rational to believe that the Apostles, those Grand Exemplars after Christ, of all Holy Practice, wou'd not omit the like Ceremony, before the Remembrance of a far greater Deliverance, that from Death Eternal, which the *Passion*, and *Resurrection* of Christ represents to us.

Besides, 'tis to be considered that most of the *Christian Oeconomy* being transferred from and framed according to the several Usages and Institutions among the *Jews*, as our *Bishops*, *Presbyters*, and *Deacons*, from their *High-Priests*, *Priests*, and *Levites*; our *Excommunication*, from their *Judicial Proceedings* with great Offenders; our *Lords Supper*, from their *Paschal Sacrifice*; our *Baptism* from their *Circumcision*, and Manner of admitting *Profelytes*; our *Lord's Day*, from their *Sabbath*; our *Good Friday*, from their *Great Day of Expiation*; our *Feast of Easter*, from their *Passover*; and lastly, the *Wednesday* and *Friday Fasts*, and the *Old Stationary Days*, from their *Weekly Fasts* and *Stations*; why shou'd not their
Ante-

Ante-propitiation Fast be imitated by the *Christian Church* also? (between which and the ensuing *Feast*, in both Churches, there was such a near and even necessary Connexion:) And if there was so great Reason for it, how can we doubt but that the Apostles did observe it?

Then for the Number *Forty*: Much may be said to persuade us, that the Apostles had regard to that particular Number of Days in their *Ante-paschal Fast*: First, because † *Forty* was always looked on, even under the Old Testament, as a Number most proper for *Fasting* and *Penitence*, and as making a compleat *Penitential Season*; whence *Moses* going up into the Mount, to supplicate God for the Sins of the People, and *Elijah* flying from *Jezebel*, are both described to fast *forty Days*; the *Ninevites* had just so many Days allowed for their Repentance;

† Porro Quadragenarius numerus convenit Peccatoribus, & Jejunio, & Orationi, &c. St. Hieron. in Jon. c. 3.

Quadragenarius numerus Sacratum à Sæculis Quadrageinta diebus ac noctibus expiaturus terram cœlestis imber effunditur. Chrysost.

St. Ambrose also declares Quadragenarium numerum divinitus consecratum. Serm. 36.

‡ *Vid. Disc.*
of Lent,
pag. 141,
142.

Our * Blessed Saviour, when he was pleased to *fast*, observed the same Space of time; And the ‡ *Jews* themselves appointed a *formal Preparation* of just *forty Days* before their *Paschal Solemnity*; They beginning to sound a Horn (in imitation of *Moses*) on the first Day of the Sixth Month, to warn the People to Repentance, from which time to the Tenth Day of the Seventh Month, their *Expiation-day*, was just *forty Days*: And tho' they did afterwards discontinue their *Fast* in the intermediate time, yet they all began their *Preparation* on the First Day of the Sixth Month, just *forty Days* before their Great Day of *Atonement*; the devouter Persons amongst them frequently continuing their Devotion through the whole *forty Days*, and pursuing it more intensely in the last Week of that Space: which Religious Practice affording so just a Pattern of our *Christian Lent*, established on so good Grounds, and being also observed by the People of the *Jews* (the nature of whose Oeconomy and their Promises

* Ipse quoque Dominus, verus *Jonas*, missus ad prædicationem Mundi, jejunavit 40 dies, & hæreditatem nobis Jejunii reliquit. St. *Hieron.* ut supra.

of Temporal Enjoyments made such Abstinencies and Rigours less suitable to them than to *Christians*) 'tis not to be supposed but that the Apostles (as much as was consistent with their great Affairs and most painful Services, adding also, as far as was requisite for their Spiritual Wants) wou'd most readily transcribe after so fair a Copy, and that too, agreeably with the Genius of the Christian Religion (which is to *fill up* and compleat what was only *typical* and Figurative under the Law) by practising more fully and perfectly what the *Jews* did but, as it were, faintly attempt.

And so much in the Way of *Reason*, to prove that the Apostles did themselves observe a proper *Lent* or *Antepaschal Fast*.

But we need not take up here, and rest on Inferences, Probabilities, and Supposals, since we are able to produce good Warrant of History, or positive Testimony in proof of the same.

And here I only pretend to deliver, in a shorter and plainer manner, some part of what the very Learned ^{† Lent-fast} Bishop *Gunning* has most judiciously ^{p. 27. &c.} observed on this Subject.

Now

Now a very exprefs Testimony for the Apostles *Fasting* constantly every Year, at and about the time of our Saviour's *Death and Sufferings*, is recorded by that very Antient Father *Tertullian*, who lived in the First Century after the Death of St. *John*, and who, in Defence of the *New-fasts* of the *Montanists*, superadded to the *Church-fasts*, and enjoined as by *Divine Command*, thus represents the Church's Exceptions to those Novelists, *Vid.*
 “ ‡ That *Montanus* and his Followers
 “ were to be condemned for institu-
 “ ting, as by *Divine Precept*, two *New*
 “ *Lents*, each of a Week long, besides
 “ that of a Fortnight before *Easter* ;
 “ whereas the *Days of Christian-fasting*
 “ were *ordained by God*, or in the Go-

‡ Arguunt nos quod Jejunia propria custodiamus, quòd Stationes plerumque in Vesperam producamus — Nam quòd ad Jejunia pertineat, certos dies à Deo constitutos opponunt — Certè in Evangelio illos dies Jejuniis determinatos putant in quibus ablati sunt sponsus, & hos esse jam solos Legitimos Jejuniorum Christianorum — Itaque de cætero indifferenter jejunandum, ex arbitrio, non ex imperio novæ Disciplinæ, pro temporibus & causis uniuscujusque. Sic & Apostolos observasse, nullum aliud imponentes jugum certorum & in commune omnibus obendorum Jejuniorum ; proinde nec Stationum, quæ & ipsæ suos quidem dies habeant, quartæ Feriæ & sextæ, passivè tamen currant, neque sub lege Præcepti. *Tertull. de Jejun. c. 1.*

“ *spel*

“ *spel*, namely, *those Days* in which
 “ the *Bridegroom* was *Taken away*,
 “ which are now the only *Days* ap-
 “ pointed, in ordinary, for the *Fasts*
 “ of the Church; and that therefore,
 “ as to any other time, *Fasting* was to
 “ be used according to *Discretion*, and
 “ upon particular Occasions and Cau-
 “ ses; but not by the force of a Com-
 “ mand; That the *Apostles* did so ob-
 “ serve the *Rule of Fasting*, imposing
 “ no other Burden of *Set-fasts* to be
 “ observed of all in common. Thus
 that severe Man (the rigour of whose
 Temper seemed to carry him into the
 Errours of *Montanus*) represents the
 Thoughts of the *Catholicks* concern-
 ing the *Ante-paschal* Fast. And what
 do's he answer for himself? Do's he
 deny that there were certain *Days of*
Fasting prescribed by Divine Autho-
 rity, and limited to the Season of our
 Saviour's *Passion*? And that no other
 Days were to be *fasted*, as by positive
 Divine Precept? Or, cou'd he say that
 the *Apostles* themselves did not observe
 this same *Rule of Fasting*? Most cer-
 tainly he wou'd have denied these
 things if he cou'd, in justification of
 himself and his Party. But yet we find
 him only replying to the *Catholicks*,

F

† That

† That they did not keep to their own *Rule*, because they observed the *Wednesday* and *Friday Stationary-Fasts*, which, he said, had no reference to the *Passion of CHRIST*: Whereas, *1st*, Those *Primitive Weekly-Fasts*, may fitly be resolved to be founded partly on

† Præscribitis constituta esse Solennia huic Fidei, Scripturis vel Traditione Majorum; nihilque Observationis amplius adjiciendum ob illicitum Innovationis. State in isto gradu si potestis: Ecce enim convenio vos, & præter Pascha jejunantes, citra illos dies quibus ablati sunt Sponsus, & Stationum Semi-jejunia interponentes, &c. *Ibid* c. 13.

As to those words in the foregoing Passages, which seem to preclude the appointment of any other Fasts to be observed of all in common, after, and besides the Ante-paschal One, or the Days wherein the Bridegroom was taken away, namely, those Words Nullum aliud imponentes jugum (scil. Apostolos) certorum, & in commune omnibus obeundorum Jejuniorum; and, Nihilque observationis amplius adjiciendum ob illicitum Innovationis: And again, Itaque de cætero indifferenter jejunandum, ex arbitrio, non ex imperio novæ Disciplinæ, pro temporibus & causis uniuscujusque: The sense of which the Catholicks did plead in defence of their own Practice, and against the rigorous Innovations of the Montanists (in their new super-added Lents, and prolonging the Weekly Stations to the Evening, and exacting the Use of The Dry Diet, &c.) 'Tis not difficult to answer, That those Expressions do, by no means, imply any Unlawfulness of appointing other Publick or Stated Fasts, besides, or beyond the Fast of Lent, but were intended only to censure and condemn those Appointments, when made by such Usurping Enthusiastick Teachers as Montanus, (who pretended new Revelations from the Spirit of God;) and to assert the freedom of the Weekly Stationary Fasts: For, as for the power of Lawful (Spiritual) Governours to indict Publick Fasts, as Occasion served, we have the express Testimony of Tertullian for it, in
some

some relation they bear to the *Death and Sufferings* of Christ, (the one being the Day on which he was sold to the *High Priests*, the other on which he was *Crucified*;) and partly on imitation of *Jewish Practice*, (the ancient *Jews* fasting two Days in the Week)

And to the former of these both St. S. *Aug.*
Augustin and *Epiphanius* do refer the
ground of the Churches Fasting on
those Days: But 2^{ly}, there is no need
of answering *Tertullian* in that man-
ner, because those *Weekly-Fasts* were
observed, not as of Divine Obligation,
but of Choice and Freedom, (*sub ar-
bitrio, non ex imperio,*) being not so-
lemn commanded Days of General
Fasting, as those in the *Passion-Week*, or

Ep. 86.
Epiph. de
Expos. fid.
cap. 22.

the 13th chapter of his Book De Jeuniis, where pleading for the heretical Practices of his new Prophet Montanus (then newly acknowledged by him) he thus bears witness to the Churches Power, in those Earliest Times, Bene autem quod & Episcopi universæ plebi mandare Jeunia assolent, — interdum & ex aliquâ solitudinis Ecclesiasticæ causâ: (Vid. Bp. Gunning's Paschal or Lent-Fast, p. 436, and 500.)

Christian Liberty therefore is in no degree infringed by the Ordering of whatever Publick enjoyned Fasts, when done by lawful Authority, according to the unlimited Com-
mission for Fasting that seems to be given in those Words; Then shall they fast in those Days, viz. the Days after the Bridegroom's Departure; which some Anchorets or Religious Christians did interpret in such a manner, as to fast every day in the Year, to their Lives end.

Lent-Fast
pag. 27.

like the new Fasts of *Montanus* enjoyed as by Divine Authority. This Record therefore of *Tertullian's* (his own Exceptions to some part of it nothing hindring) may well be esteemed a standing Authentick Witness, as to the Apostolical Authority of *Lent*, or the *Antepaschal Fast*, so to this particular Truth, that the Apostles *did Themselves observe* such a *Fast*, recommending nothing to others but what they had Themselves before fully and eminently practised: And let me add (with Bishop *Gunning*) that 'such a Testimony this of *Tertullian's* is, that, altho' written with one Pen, yet, as containing the Opinions of all the best *Catholicks* of that Time, it ought to be looked on as the Evidence not of a single Father, but of the Church itself; and that too (as was said) within the First Century of Years after the Death of St *John*.

Then for the Practice of Christian People, in, and after the Apostles Times, That they derived their Observance of *Lent*, or the *Forty-Season*, not meerly from Ecclesiastical Constitution, but even from Apostolical Direction and Tradition, may be collected,

1. From

I. From the Testimony of *Philo* the Jew, which cannot but be considerable in the Case, he being contemporary with the Apostles, having conversed with St. *Mark* the Evangelist, and the Christians at *Alexandria*, and coming (saith ^a *Eusebius*) into speech with St. *Peter* ^a Lib. 2. c. 16, 17. (whose Disciple St. *Mark* was) at *Rome*. This Learned Person tho' of a different Religion, having yet not only seen these First Christians of *Alexandria*, but accurately taken Notice of them, from a desire he had of setting forth what was excellent in his Countrymen, in his Book ^b Of the Religious, ^b Περὶ τῶν Θεραπευτῶν. thus describes their *Paschal Fast*; † That they were frequent in assembling together for the space of seven Weeks, holding a pure and virginal Observance, that they might prepare themselves for the greatest Feast (the Feast of Easter) which beginneth a Solemnity of fifty Days; to which end, they in

† Ἀθροίζονται διὰ ἐπὶ ἑβδομάδων. Ἀγνὴν γὰρ καὶ ἀειπάρθενον αὐτὴν ἴσασιν (scil. Νηστίαν) Ἐστὶ δὲ ὡσεὶ ὁρπύριον μέγιστος ἑορτῆς ἢ πενήκοντας ἔλαχεν — ἀνακράτος τοῖς ἡδοναῖς φίλτροις ἀπεχθόμενοι. Οἷον δὲ ἐν ἐκείναις τοῖς ἡμέραις ἐκ εἰσκομίζεσθαι — καὶ τρώγεσθαι κατὰ τῶν ἐναίμων — μετὰ δὲ τὸ δειπνῆσαι τὴν ἱερὰν ἀγασσιν παννυχίδα. Βιβ. περὶ τῶν Θεραπευτῶν.

And this Discipline (saith *Eusebius*) was exercised more eminently about the Passion of our Lord, διαφραγόντως κατὰ τὴν ἑσπερίαν πάντας ἑορτῶν. Lib. 2. c. 17.

this Season mightily resisted the Bewitchings of Pleasures, avoiding Flesh and Wine, spending their Hours in Eucharistical Songs to God their Saviour, having God in perpetual Remembrance, and twice every Day, Morning and Evening, being wont to pray (in Publick:) And of some of them, he writes, that after Supper they would (sometimes) celebrate an holy whole-night's Vigil:

Vid. *Lent-Fast*. pag. 33. (a Custom that prevailed much both in the East and West-Churches on *Easter-Eve*.)

Ibid. pag. 31. As to which Religious Christians (whom *Philo* calls† *Apostolical Persons*) 'tis very probable (says Bishop *Gunning*) that they were taught this *Paschal* Devotion by St. *Mark* the Evangelist, who himself practised the same at *Alexandria* in the Apostles own Days. And the Account which *Philo* gives of their *Religious Fastings* is such, as *Eusebius* declares, can agree to none but the Christian Religion, and which from ‡ *evident Demonstration* (he says) may be proved to belong to Christians only. And the same *Eusebius* affirms that *Philo* in that Book hath related

† Ἄνδρες Ἀποστολικὲς. *Philo*, libro supra dicto.
‡ Ἐναργεστέρως ἀπαδείξει.

* *Customs which were delivered in the Beginning from the Apostles, and which had descended down accurately even to his own Times.*

This Testimony therefore of *Philo*, in the Judgment not only of Bishop *Gunning*, but *Eusebius*, is as good an Evidence concerning the *Paschal Observance* of those First Christians in *Egypt*, who lived in the Life-time of several of the Apostles, as cou'd be expected from a Learned Writer, himself not a Christian, in commendation of Christians his Country-men.

2. In the famous Dispute between *Polycarp* (a Disciple of St. *John*) and *Anicetus* Bishop of *Rome*, and, after, with less Amity, between *Polycrates*, Bishop of *Ephesus*, and *Victor*, Bishop of *Rome*, (with their Adherents) concerning the time of keeping *Easter*, tho' they differed about the punctual Time or Day of observing that *Paschal Feast*, the former of those Contenders in each Dispute (*Polycarp*, and *Polycrates*,) from the Authority of St. *John*, and St. *Philip*, the Apostles (who in condescension to the Jews of those

* Ἐν ἀρχῇ ὡς τῶν Ἀποστόλων παραδεδωμένα. Lib. 2. c. 16, 17.

Parts where they preached observed the Christian Easter on the same Day with the the Jewish *Easter*) urging for the keeping *Easter* on the 14th Day of the Month, whatever Day of the Week it fell on; the latter, from the evident Tradition and Practice of St. *Peter*, and St. *Paul*, (who, having no occasion of complying with the Jews, constantly celebrated *Easter* on the weekly Memorial Day) insisting for the celebration of *Easter* on the weekly Day of our LORD'S Resurrection; I say, tho' these great Disputants differed about the precise Day of observing *Easter*, or the Memorial of our LORD'S Resurrection, yet they all unanimously agreed in this, as founded † on *Tradition Apostolical*, that an ‡ *Easter* was to be kept, and also that on the *Eve of*

πάχα Ἁ-
ριστασιμὸν.

† Περὶ τῆς κατελεύσεως εἰς αὐτοὺς ἐκ διαδοχῆς τῶν Ἀποστόλων καὶ τῆς Πάχα παραδόσεως πλείστα διεληφότες.] See this Expression cited by Bp Gunning from Eusebius, and applied to several Antient Bishops, of whom Eusebius, (l. 5. c. 25.) relates that, being in Council met, they treated largely of the Tradition of the Paschal Season, which (they said) had come down to them from the Apostles by Succession. Vid. Lent-Fast, pag. 33.

‡ Which Anniversary Feast they called Ἡ Ἑσπερινὴ Πάχα ἱερὴ, The Feast of the Salutary Pasch; And which was esteemed by the Christians as Μία Ἡμέρα ἑξαιρετὴ ἀπὸ πάντων τῶν ἡμερῶν, the One Day that is most eminent in all the Year. Lent-Fast, pag. 34—36.

Easter

Easter (and not before) * *certain preceding Fasts were to be dissolved, or ended.*

Which is a great and standing Authority for the very Primitive Observance of an *Ante-paschal Fast*; the last of those Disputes, between *Polycrates* and *Victor*, happening but about the Year 97. after St. *John's* Death.

To this let be added what St. *Irenæus* (who lived in the First Century after the Apostles, and had seen St. *Polycarp*) wrote to *Victor* Bishop of *Rome*, on the Subject in hand; *vid.* That not only concerning the Day it self of *Easter*, there was Controversy, but also about the Manner of the preceding *Fast* (ὡς τὸ εἶδος τῆς Νηστείας.) And this ποικιλία or *variety* in observing the *Fast*, he saith, *was not now first in his Days, but long before* (πολὺ πρὶν αὐτῶν) *in their Times who lived before them.* Before which (then) ancient *Difference or Variety*, he yet farther records that there had preceded *An Agreement*, † *a simple and plain Custom*

* Ὡς δὲ τὰς νηστείας ἐπιλύεσθαι, ἢ τὰς τῶν ἀσκήτων ἐπιλύσεις ποιῶν.

† Ἡ κατ' ὁμολογητὰς ἐιδωλισμὸν συνήθεια. Ἰδωλισμὸς, i. e. *vulgata consuetudo*: Ἰδιῶται πολίται, (i. e. *vulgar and genuine Citizens*.) Suid. *Vid. Lent-Fast. Append. p. 472, 473*

Lent-Fast,
pag. 40.

of the Form of Fasting, for those that had Health and Strength: Which (as Bishop Gunning observes) how cou'd it be otherwise than from the Apostles own Times? Since *Irenæus* who mentions this *plain Custom* wrote the Epistle (that contains it) to *Victor* about the 97th Year after St. *John's* Death: Which *plain uniform Custom* being not accurately retained, became changed into that which followed: And yet the ensuing Difference (says Bishop Gunning) agreed to a *Paschal-Fast*.

Much more might be alledged from Witnesses of the Earliest Christian Times to prove a general Observance of a *Lent* or *Spring-Fast* (tho' with Variety) in the Church Universal from the Beginning, as grounded on Instruction Evangelical and Apostolical Tradition, and that too with respect had to the Number *Forty*; particularly I might cite *Origen*, who is reckoned to the Second Century after St. *John*, and expressly mentions the *Quadragesimal*, or *Forty-season* as sacred to Fasting ‡; *Habemus enim* (says he) *Quadragesimæ Dies jejuniis consecratos*, For we have the *Forty days of Lent* consecrated to Fastings:

‡ Homil. 10. in Levit. (quæ Latine tantum nunc extat.)

That also of St. *Hierom* (afterwards) is very considerable, *Nos unam Quadragesimam toto anno, tempore congruo jejunamus, secundum Traditionem Apostolorum*; We keep one Fast in the Year of Forty Days according to the Tradition of the Apostles: But for the remaining part of that Collection I refer to Bishop *Gunning* himself: What has been already produced being very sufficient to convince us of the Mistake of **Mons. Daille* in denying the Observance of this *Ancient Fast*, during some of the First Centuries of the *Christian Church*, and to make us wonder how that justly celebrated Frenchman came to fall into so strange an Errour.

As to that Scruple of his, That had any *Lent of forty Days* been observed by the *Catholicks* of the 1st, or 2^d Century, it must have been formally mentioned amongst *Tertullian's* Objections

* *Who feared not to entitle one of the Chapters of his Book De Jeuniis & Quadragesimâ, in these Words, Demonstratur secundo Quadragesimam non fuisse secundi, tertiiq; seculi Christianis cognitam aut observatam: And having, as he phrases, proved his Point, he in the body of that Chapter, thus infers concerning this Apostolical Fast, Nunquam ab Apostolis institutam fuisse, Cum, quæcunque ab Apostolis instituta fuerunt, ea nulli Fideles sanctius & accuratius servaverint, quam qui prioribus duobus, tribusve Christianismi sæculis vixerunt. Dallaus de Jejun. Gr. lib. 3. cap. 5.*

in

in the 13th and 14th Chapters of his Book of *Fasting*, and that when the *Catholicks* charged him with adding to the *Church-Fasts* by having 3 *Lents* in the Year, he wou'd certainly have retorted upon them, not only for transgressing their Rule by the *Weekly-Stations*, but also by devoting many more Days to *Abstinence* in their *Antepaschal Fast*, than those in which the *Bridegroom* was taken away, whether thereby we understand precisely the *Friday* and *Saturday* only before *Easter*, (those very Days in which Christ was Taken, Crucified, and Buried,) or more largely the whole *Passion Week*, (which some reckoned from † *Monday*, the Day of the Caption of the *Paschal Lamb*, in conformity to which they supposed our Saviour to have been at that time singled out as it were, by the High Priests, and determined for Sacrifice;) I say, as to this, which I take to be the full of *Daillé's* Exception and violent presumption against any *Lent* or *Spring Fast* of 40 Days in those earliest Ages, It may be answered, 1st, That if, according to the very Learned Bishop * *Beveridge's* Note, that charge of *Ter-*

† Called in
the Eastern
and Western
Churches
Ἡ Ἀγία καὶ
Μεγάλη
Δευτέρα.

So Tuesday
in Pas-
sion-Week,
Ἡ Ἀγία καὶ
Μεγάλη
Τρίτη.
Et sic de
seqq.

* Cod. Canon. l. 3. c. 6. & Vid. *Discourse* concern-
ing Lent, pag. 64. 67.

tullian's upon the *Catholicks* for fasting *citra illos Dies in quibus ablati sunt Sponsus*, be to be understood, † as the Words will bear, of *Fasting* on *other Days besides*, or *before those in which the Bridegroom was taken away*, then he may well be thought in that place, in justification of his own Practice, to censure the *Catholicks* for extending their *Lent* to that Length they did (how long soever that might be) without due warrant from Scripture; And the Reason of his not mentioning the exact limits of it, or the number *Forty*, to which it was by some enlarged, but contenting himself with expressing that *Forty-Season* only under the general Title of *other Days besides those in which the Bridegroom was taken away*, is well accounted for, 2dly, By a late ‡ Worthy Writer, who observes that 'as the Number *Forty* was not then generally fixt for a *Fast*, as it is in the Latin and Greek Church now, but, in those Limits, observed uncertainly and at Discretion, and

† The Context seems evidently to favour this Meaning; the *Stationum semi Jejunia* which follow being distinguished from the *Jejunium præter Pascha*, or *citra illos Dies* that goes before, by an *et Copulative*.

‡ Discourse of Lent. p. 63.

but

' but rarely, perhaps to the full extent
 ' of that Number; so the *Lent-Fast* was
 ' for the most part private and not di-
 ' stinguished, like the *Fifty Days* of *Pen-*
 ' *tecost*, by any Publick Action: And
 ' farther yet, 3dly, had not the *Catho-*
 ' *licks* of that Age observed some addi-
 ' tional *Lent*, beyond the ordinary pre-
 ' scribed Days, or a more enlarged *Fast*
 ' than barely the *Passion-Week*, *Tertulli-*
 ' *an* must have been obliged (says my
 Ibid. p. 62. ' † Author) to have accounted for their
 ' *fixed Fortnight* before *Easter*, as well
 ' as for their other *New Lents*; whereas
 ' in his 15th Chapter he thinks himself
 ' bound to defend the other 2 Weeks on-
 ' ly, as *Fasts* peculiar to his own Sect, and
 ' leaves us therefore to infer that there
 ' was little Difference between them con-
 ' cerning the *Antepaschal Fast*: And in,
 ' deed the *Catholicks* had nothing to
 ' object to the *Montanists* concerning
 ' the Length of this *Fast*, but only a-
 ' bout the Necessity of it as by Divine
 ' Command: Which was a thing the
 ' Church could not agree to, since only
 ' the precise Days of our Saviour's *Ab-*
 ' *lation* or *Taking away*, or at most the
 ' *Passion-Week* were fasted by them as of
 ' *Divine Precept*; the rest of *Lent* be-
 ' ing observed only upon the Argument
 of

of Recommendation, or Tradition Apostolical, and that *Traditio Consilii, non Præcepti*, (*Tradition of Counsel, not of Command*;) ‘ So that altho’ a *Lent* ‘ there was generally kept in the first ‘ Ages of Christianity, and that with regard had to the Number *Forty*; Yet ‘ it is not pretended, that that certain ‘ Number of Days was fasted by All, and ‘ every where, Equally, so soon: † But ‘ we are ready to allow of other places, ‘ what St. *Chrysostom* intimates of *Antioch*, in his Time, That *some* (there) ‘ *fasted two, some three, and some all the* ‘ *Weeks of Lent, at their own Discretion*. ‘ However a *Lent*, or *Forty-Season* it ‘ appears there then was, to which All, ‘ in some degree, paid a Religious Regard.

For that other Objection of *Daille’s* (which is used to be produced as Unanswerable) against the Antiquity of *Lent* out of * *Cassian*, (a Disciple of St. *Chrysostom’s*) who declares *That this Observation of Forty Days* (vid. *as it was practised in his Time*) *had no Being as*

* Vid. *Discourse concerning Lent*, pag. 123.

† Colloq. cap. 30. Sciendum sanè hæc Observantiam *Quadragesima*, quamdiu Ecclesiæ istius Primitivæ Perfectio, &c.

long as the Perfection of the Primitive Church continued, the Members whereof by their Voluntary Devotion throughout the Year, did (already) exceed the prescribed Law; So that this Ordinance was never commanded by Canonical Injunction, till Believers, through Worldly Mindedness, daily fell off from that Apostolical Devotion, and became immersed in Worldly Cares: This Passage of Cassian, I say (not passing by unobserved how he calls *Fasting* that *Apostolical Devotion*) is well answered by the forementioned † Author, “ That
 “ *Cassian* speaks here of the *forty Days*,
 “ and not of *Lent* in general; and of
 “ their being fasted by *Injunction*,
 “ and not at *Discretion*; which in
 “ that full Extent, we don’t pretend
 “ to have been absolutely and strictly
 “ required by the Apostles; But the
 “ stricter observance of *Lent*, so useful to the most Vicious, was first enjoined by *General Councils*, when
 “ Men became immersed in the Cares
 “ of the World, and almost wholly
 “ ignorant of the Duties of *Abstinence*
 “ and *Repentance*: But yet those Perfect Men, he speaks of, who of

† Discourse of Lent. pag. 125.

“ them-

“ themselves enlarged the *Fast* so plen-
 “ tifully throughout the Year, might
 “ (however) have fasted some pecu-
 “ liar time before *Easter*, with a more
 “ particular Devotion, and some of
 “ them too *forty Days*, tho’ not by
 “ legal *Direction*, yet of their *own*
 “ *Choice*, and at the Recommendation
 “ of the Apostles, *received by Tradi-*
 “ *tion*; notwithstanding any thing said
 “ in this Place.

Cassian therefore has cast no Refle-
 ction on the most primitive Antiquity
 of the *Lent-Fast*, his Meaning being
 no more than that whilst the Vigour of
 Christianity remained, there was need
 of no Canonical Laws to enforce
 the Duty of *Fasting*, the First *Chri-*
stians or rather some * *Anchorets* or

* Vid, Bp Gunning of Lent Fast. App. p. 505. & 489.
 in the former of which Places, that Learned Person and A-
 ble Champion challenges any Adversary to shew any Age,
 wherein by the Generaliry of Christians an equal Fast was
 kept throughout the Year, as it was perhaps by *Cassianus's*
Asceticks: And he farther notes that though *Cassian* says, the
 Exercise of holy Fasting was extended by some per totum
 annum, yet he no were affirms that the same was done (in
 that Manner) per totum Orbem Christianum; which is the
 Universality that we plead for the Observance of a Lent-
 Fast. And, as to what some would infer from *Cassian*,
 That the Paschal Fast was afterwards introduced by Bi-
 shops and Priests, he answers, There was never any Age of
 the Church without that Fast, nor could it therefore

This

Religious whom *Cassianus* had especially in his Eye, being of themselves so forwardly inclined to ~~the~~ Spiritual and divine Exercise, that there wanted nothing more than the Intimations of our Saviour, and the Recommendation of his Apostles, to set them to the almost-perpetual practice of *Abstinence*; But that afterwards, in process of time, *the love of many waxing cold*, and the generality of *Christians* becoming grossly negligent in this Concerning Affair, the Church thought herself oblig'd to require that to be done by *Positive Law*, which they would not perform of good Will, and agreeably to the double sense of our Lord's *jejunabunt*, vid. *they will*, or *they shall fast*, when Men would not practice this Duty of their own Accord, upon the gentle Motives of Persuasion and Counsel, to force them by Law and Penalty to some Observance of it.

And let thus much be said to *Monf. Daille*.

be brought in by any following Age, though it might be oft reinforced and urged into more diligent Practice, and whetted upon Christian People, as in the Council of Laodicea, &c. Vid. ut supra.

II. The

II. The Second Adversaries to this Primitive ~~Lent~~-Fast, are the *Presbyterians*; who, in the Conference at the *Savoy* Anno 1660. scrupled not to make it part of what they proposed for *Alteration*; who, in their † *Grand Debate* ^{† Pag. 65} _{Gr.} expressly desire, That *nothing should be in the Liturgy which so much as seems to countenance the Fast of Lent, as a Religious Fast*; and who, in short, resolve the Observance of *all set or stated Fasts* to be both *Superstitious and Judaical*.

1. They say such Observance is *Superstitious*, i. e. needless and superfluous, a fond Invention of Men, and vainly, at least, if not hurtfully pursued, because grounded on no *Express Warrant*, or *Command* in Scripture. (This is their Sense.)

I shall answer this calumny by the following Steps or Degrees:

1. To call for *Express Command* of Holy Scripture for every part or circumstance of Duty, has always been lookt on as a Note of heretical Pravity; the Hereticks of ancient Times (and ever since) being wont to clamour for *Demonstrations* (ὑποδείξεις ἐπι-
δείξεις) as St. Basil long ago observed:

Lib. de
Spir. S. 10. 6.

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The Measures and Manner

2. There is no need of an † *Express written Precept* to render any *Christian* Observance not *Superstitious*, but *Obligatory*, and reaching the *Conscience*. If our Brethren deny this, I would ask them what *positive Command* they find in *Scripture* for celebrating the *Yearly Feasts* of *Christmas, Easter, Pentecost*, or even of the *Weekly Lord's Day*. They cannot produce an *Evidenter Præceptum* for any of these: No; our *Observation* of these *Days* is built on the *Reason* and *Congruity* of the thing,

† S. Augustin in behalf of the Authority of some Customs in the Church, for which there is no ἔγγραφον παρὰ γὰρ γράμμα, no written Command, but only ἀγγελία μυστική, unwritten Tradition, strengthened by General Practice, in his 5th Book de Baptismo contra Donatistas, c. 23. thus speaks, Apostoli nihil quidem exinde præceperunt, sed Consuetudo illa ab eorum Traditione exordium sumfisse credenda est; sicut sunt multa quæ Univerſa tenet Ecclesia, & ob hoc ab Apostolis præcepta benè creduntur, quam scripta non reperiuntur. And again, l. 4. c. 23. Quod Univerſa tenet Ecclesia, nec Consiliis institutum, sed semper retentum est, non nisi Apostolicâ Authoritate traditum rectissimè credimus; sicuti quod Domini Passio &c. Anniversariâ Solemnitate celebrantur. S. Basil agrees hereto, citing the words of the Apostle 2 Theſ. ij. 15. and saying, Ἀποστολικὸν δὲ καὶ τὸ, Κρατεῖτε τὰς παραδόσεις αἵς παρελάβετε, εἴτε Ἀγ. λόγῳ, εἴτε δι' ἐπιστολῆς. Lib. de Spir. Sto. c. 29. And for the Objection that may be taken from the Oral Tradition of the Romanists in things not Univerſally received, as the Ordinance of the Lent-Fast was and is, 'tis easily answered, That the Abuse of Things in themselves good and profitable, must not vacate the Use of them. Upon the abovenamed Grounds therefore S. Austin elsewhere pronounces, That to dispute against any Usage
the

the like Festival Commemorations among the *Jews*, some Foundation in Scripture (as that of the *Lord's Day* or *Sunday* on *Apoc.* 1. 10) and the Interpretation and Practice of the *Universal Church*. This is abundant Authority for any Religious Observance: And on such the *Lent-Fast* stands firm and steadfast. *Then shall they fast in those Days* (*Ὁ ἐνέμειναι ταῖς ἡμέραις,*) after the Bridegrooms *Departure*, that is, and in the Days of his *Ablation* or being *Taken away* from them, says our Blessed Saviour himself: There is a sufficient Designation of the *Lent* or *Antepaschal-Fast*, if not also of the *Weekly Fasting Days* in the Primitive Church: The extending the former to the Number of 40 *Days*, being done, as is most Probable, by the Apostles themselves and

(though Unwritten) of the *Universal Church*, insolentissimæ est insanix. Vid. Bp Gunning of the *Lent-Fast*. pag. 135, 136.

Let this only be here added, that when S. Augustin and others of the Ancients speak of the Reverence due to Ecclesiastical Tradition, they are to be understood to speak not of Masters of Faith, or Essential Duties Moral, or the Essence of Sacraments, all which we are taught by the Consent of the same Ancient Fathers to be contained expressly in the Holy Scriptures; But only of Ritual Observances, which being visible, and as it were legible in the *Universal Churches* constant Practice, needed not to be set down in her written Rule; or those which are set down, not of Necessity so evidently expressed, but that they might need the Interpretation of the Churches Practice, Vid. Ibid. p. 138.

confirmed by them and the succeeding Stewards and Governors of the Church, (who by their Office were to take care of the Will and Pleasure of their Lord, the *Bridegroom*;) and who, grounding their Conduct on the highest Reason and Equity, if not on the Words of our Lord himself expressed to the Apostles, did by their own Practice and Recommendation Sanctify and Recommend a *Forty-Days-Fast* in the Christian Church, preparatory to the Feast of *Easter*, and in pious Memory of the *Bridegroom*, the Eternal Son of God (sacrificed in our Nature for the Sins and Debts of, his Spouse, the Church, as a Ransom and Atonement for them;) They not imagining that less Devotion and Regard was due to such a Saviour and the Redemption wrought by him, than the *Jews* paid to *Moses*, and their *Expiation-Day*, in remembrance of him (their Founder) his twice *fasting 40 Days*, and of their *Freedom* from cruel Bondage. On such solid Basis does the Annual Solemnity of our *Lent-Fast* subsist, namely, on the *Designation*, or fair Intimation at least of our Saviour himself, the Practice and Recommendation of the Apostles (those Friends of the *Bridegroom*, and Sons of his nearest Admis-

sion) together with the Interpretation and Custom of the most Primitive Church: Which is such Authority for a Matter of this Nature, that if any shall presume to oppose their own *private Interpretations* or Exceptions to it, we must put them in mind of that † Canon of our Church, made since the Reformation, which forbids any to interpret Scripture, in things relating to Faith or Practice, otherwise than agreeably with the Doctrine of the Ancient Fathers and Doctors of the Church: And farther against such Contradictors, we must (as Bp Gunning speaks) retain our Appeal, which St.

† *That Men might not think themselves at liberty, to put what sense they please on Texts of Scripture (which Practice hath been the Ground of all Heresies and Schisms) our Church hath commanded, that none do interpret Scripture, in things relating to Faith and Practice, but agreeably with the Doctrine of the Ancient Fathers and Writers of the Church: The Words are, Videbunt ne quid unquam doceant pro concione quod a Populo religiose teneri & credi velint, nisi quod consentaneum sit Doctrinæ veteris & Novi Testamenti, quodque ex illâ ipsâ Doctrinâ Catholici Patres & veteres Episcopi collegerint. Lib. Can. Ecclesiæ Anglican. Anno 1571. Vide Bishop Gunning Lent-Fast. pag. 23. Where that Great Man calls Scripture as expounded by Councils, and Reverend Fathers and Writers, the Teaching and Stable Interpretation of the Church; by departing from which, both Popes and Enthusiasts have perverted the Scriptures, to their own and others Destruction.*

Paul hath taught us, to the *Churches-Customs*, and let them know, that it is an Apostolical note of contentious *Persons* (to whom belongs tribulation and wrath) not to acquiesce in such Evidence. And if *St. Paul* thought it sufficient to silence all Disputes in the Matter of forbidding *Women* to sit uncover'd in the Church, to say, we have no such Custom (as for Women to sit uncover'd in Publick) neither the Churches of God; it is sure, as strong an Argument for our set solemn Fasts, to alledge, as we most justly can and do, That it hath been the Churches Custom and Practice so to fast from most early Antiquity.

If any are not satisfied with this Argument, *The Practice and Custom* of the Universal Church, the Mother of us all, whose Authority is above all Mothers, (Christ the Spouse and Bridegroom of the Church having promised to be with her, by his directing Spirit, even to the Worlds End) in Conjunction with the Doctrine of the Church in all Ages, and the Laws and Canons Ecclesiastical of the particular Church where they live, (the wholesome Orders whereof whilst not repealed by

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Authority every one is bound to observe by that plain Scripture-Precept, *Obey those that have Rule over you;*) they fall under the Censure of being not only *Contentious*, but *Disobedient*. And such is the Case of the *Anabaptists*, who, not content with the *Sanction* of baptizing Infants, contained *John* iij. 5. and the *Commission* expressed for it, *Matthew* xxvii. 19. and with the *Practice* of the Church consequent thereupon, refuse to baptize any but adult Persons: And also of the *Socinians*, who deny the necessity of Baptizing *in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*, for want (they say) of an *Example* of observing that Form in any of the Acts or Letters of the Apostles; tho' there is a direct *Commission* in Scripture for doing it, seconded by the Practice of the Church in all succeeding Ages.* And here let it be observed to the Reproach, especially, of the *Anabaptists* and *Socinians*, who are so apt to be concluded by nothing but what they have express Testimony of Scripture for, or the Practice of Christ and his Apostles; let it be observed, I say,

* *Vid.* Paschal or Lent-Fast. pag. 26.

from this one instance of *Baptizing in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*, that 'tis undeniably certain, something there was done by every Apostle, and constantly, as also by all succeeding Ages of the Church, of which yet, besides the first *Commission* (which is not *Practice*) no one Example of any of the Apostles *Practice* is at any time recorded in all the New-Testament.

Vid. Ibid.
pag. 27.

But to return to our *Presbyterian-Objectors*, who have learned (they think) to cite St. *Austin* against *set Fasts*, those words of his 86th. Epistle, *In Evangelicis & Apostolicis Libris non invenio evidenter præceptum (seu definitum) quibus Diebus oporteat jejunare; video (autem) præceptum esse Jejunium: i. e. I find it no where in the New Testament evidently prescribed what particular Days Christians ought to Fast, but there I find Fasting itself commanded: From whence they wou'd infer that Christians ought to fast only according to their own Particular Wants, or on extraordinary emergent Occasions, not at any set appointed Times, which (as was before said) they hold to be Superstitious, and Judaical. But this place*
of

of St. *Augustin*, as the most Judicious *Bp *Gunning* observes, is to be understood as spoken abstractedly from all *Interpretation* of the Church, or *Tradition* Apostolical; which, as they are of Great Authority, so are very needful against Gainfayers. For the same St. *Augustin*, who concerning Customs of *Universal Practice* in the Church, which have no *express Command* in Scripture, such as the Anniversary Celebration of *Easter*, and the like, dates their Observance either from the *Tradition* of the Apostles, or the *Authority* of General Councils, as to the particular *Fast of Lent* (which in his 118th, Epistle to *Januarius*, he says expressly was not first constituted by any General Council) he declares (taking in this *Tradition Apostolical*, from whence plainly, he by his Catholick Rule, derives it) † *Quod Quadragesima sanè jejuniorum habet Auctoritatem & in Veteribus Libris & ex Evangelio; That truly the Lent Fast hath Authority both in the Old Testament, and the New.* And having thus founded the Authority of this *Ancient Fast*, he adds in the fol-

* Paschal or Lent-Fast, pag. 60.

† Epist. 119. ad Januarium.

lowing part of the same Epistle, *Ut Quadraginta illi Dies ante Pascha observentur, Ecclesie Consuetudo roboravit: The Observance of those 40 Days before Easter the Custom of the Church hath strengthened or confirmed.*

St. *Augustin* therefore considering the Churches Interpretation of those Words of our Lord, *Then shall they fast in those Days*, and that Interpretation grounded on the Tradition of the Apostles, and also pondering the Examples of a 40 Days Fast recorded in the Old Testament, tho' having studied the *New*, he could there find no express written Precept for the Lent-Fast or Forty Season, yet upon the Whole, he was far from thinking that most Ancient Christian Fast, not to be founded on sufficient Divine Authority; *Habet enim*, says he, (as we before cited him) *Quadragesima jejuniorum Auctoritatem & in veteri Lege, & ex Evangelio*; For the Lent-Fast hath Authority both from the Old Testament, and in the Gospel: And the same holy renowned Father, in another place, calls the Fast of Lent *doctrinam Prophetarum & Apostolorum*, the doctrine of the Prophets and Apostles. †

† Leo the Great (as Bp. Gunning somewhere notes) calls the same, Doctrinam Spiritus Sancti, the Doctrine of the H. Ghost.

In the same 86. Epistle (the Epistle from whence

whence our Adversaries fetch their Objections) St. *Augustin* (as also *Epiphanius*) teaches us concerning the weekly *Fasts* in the Primitive Church, that they were founded on this, That in those Days, the Bridegroom was taken away; as they fasted on the 4th Day of the Week, (our *Wednesday*) because on that Day the *Jews* held a Council for killing of Christ; and on the 6th. Day (our *Friday*) That being manifestly the Day on which he Suffered.

De Expos.
Fid. c. 22.

On such good and everlasting Reasons and Authority does the holy *Fast* of *Lent*, (if not the weekly *Passion Days*, or Day, also) stand built and established in the *Christian Church*, for the Observation of all Ages; which yet some in our Days dare to brand with the Character of a *fond and superstitious Practice*; But so it will be, when Men want a due Reverence and Regard to the Ancients, and the *Teachings* of the Universal Church, and will not be concluded by that great Catholick Rule which *Vincen- tius Lirinensis* professed long ago to have learnt from some of the greatest Lights of the *Christian Church*, for the avoiding of Heresy and Schism, vid. *Antiquity, Universality, and the Consent* of the Genera-

Generality of the Doctors of the Church, on all which *the Christian Fast* (or *Fasts*) now under debate do stand firmly built and established.

I wou'd only here, to prevent Mistake, distinguish between the Annual *Lent-Fast*, and the Weekly returning *Days* of Fasting, (as in the Primitive Church,) and also between one part of *Lent* and the other, it being only the Conclusion of that famous and solemn *Ante-paschal Fast*, or the very *Days* of the *Ablation* of the LORD, the most Holy *Passion-Week*, (or, at the least, the *Friday* and *Saturday* in that Week,) which by the unanimous Consent of the Antients, we agree and contend to be grounded on *Proper Divine Authority*, or *Express Precept* of Scripture, as contained in those Words, *Then shall they fast in those Days*, ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις, those very *Days* of the *Ablation*, or taking away of the true Paschal Lamb, the Eternal Son of God (by a never to be forgotten Sacrifice) taking in, I mean, the Interpretation, Explication, and Practice of the Universal Church in the First Ages; The Observance of the other largest portion of *Lent*, as also of the Weekly

Weekly Fast-Days, or any other *Fasts* in the Church (abstracting from Laws Ecclesiastical) being urged only by * *Recommendation Apostolical* and the *Tradition and Practice* of the Primitive Church grounded thereon: Which yet will always be received with a religious Regard and Reverence by all serious Christians, and Lovers of the Churches Customs.

As to what *Socrates*, † in his Ecclesiastical History, says, "That considering the great Diversity in the use of *Diet* on Fasting Days, in his Time, and also that there was no *written Precept* about those things, it was

† *Hist. Eccl.*
l. 5. c. 22.

* So Epiphanius distinguishes the Churches common Observances into τὰ ἐντολὰ καὶ τὰ ἐκ προλήψεως, and τὰ κατὰ δόξαν καὶ ἐκ προλήψεως, into some enjoined by Precept or Command, and others recommended to the free devotion of Christians. In Compend. Doctrin. Vid. Lent-Fast p. 141.

The Phrase κατὰ δόξαν καὶ ἐκ προλήψεως (as Bishop Gunning's Translation of it shews) imports that the latter of those Observances were recommended with that Design and Purpose, that, without any more ado, they should be embraced by the free choice of Christian People. Ibid.

† Καὶ ἐπειδὴν οὐκ ἔστιν ὡς τὰ ἐντολὰ ἔχει δόξαν παρὰ τὸν λαόν, δὴλον ὡς ἔστιν ὡς τὰ ἐκ προλήψεως οἱ Ἀπόστολοι, &c.] Περὶ τούτου,] That is, says Bp Gunning, not (as the Presbyterians wou'd understand it,) of the Paschal Fast it self, as if the Apostles had left no Express Command concerning any religious Observance of Lent, but Socrates only speaks of the particular Manner of Abstinence in that Season, with respect to the chusing Fish or Flesh, and the degree of Refreshment at the end of any Fasting-Day, which is much left to every Man's own Choice, in the Fear of God.

" thence

" thence plain that they were left by
 " the Apostles to every one's own
 " Choice and Judgment, to do volun-
 " tarily what is Good, not for Fear,
 " or of Necessity: Which words

† V. Grand
 Debate p.
 65, &c.

† some would have applied to the Fast
 of *Lent* in such a manner, as if *Socra-
 tes* had affirmed that Whole *Religi-
 ous Fast* to be left to every ones own

* *Lent fast*,
Ap. p. 510.

Mind or Will: This, says * Bishop Gun-
 ning, is a great untruth, and a great
 abuse of their Reader; since *Socrates*
 speaks those words of the *Apostles Per-
 mission to the judgment of others*, not
 of the Religious Fast of *Lent* it self,
 nor of the *Number* of Days, more or
 fewer, but only concerning *the choice
 of Meats*, or *degree* of refreshment (of
 which he is there treating) to be used
 at the End of Mens Fasts, or on their
 Fasting Days, the Variety or Diversity
 whereof was so great (as *Socrates* shews)
 in several Countries, (as there were
 various Causes for it,) that it was evi-
 dent the Apostles had laid none *under
 bondage* in such Cases. This is the scope
 of *Socrates* in that place: And as to
 these Things, *viz.* the Abstinence from
particular Meats or *Diet*, and the *de-
 gree* of our Refreshment at the end of
 our *Fasts*, Who doubts to affirm, says
 our

our Learned Bishop, that we have no *written* Precept? and that, as for any thing left from the *Apostles* (abstracting from *Laws* or *Canons Ecclesiastical*) a *free Power* therein is permitted to every Mans Choice and Will? But how do's any thing of this Testimony, or this Allowance militate against our Liturgy, which directs nothing about the *Choice* or *Kind* of Meats (of which *Socrates* in the place alledged treats) but only trains us up to a Religious Observance of the *Lent-Fast*, teaching us in the general to pray to God for his Grace to *use such Abstinence* as may be suitable to our several Wants? So that, for any thing *Socrates* has said to the contrary, or that our Dissenters have rightly argued from him, the 25 *Leaves* in our Service-Book relating to the Religious Observance of *Lent*, as well as the Sacred 40 Days antiently separated to that Purpose, (in the Sence here given of them) may all be preserved entire.

What * *Socrates* says concerning the * *Hist. Eccl.* Usage at *Rome*, to Fast only 3 conti- l. 5. c. 22. nued Weeks or 21 Days, except Saturdays and Sundays, is answered two ways, † 1st, That his Account of what

† *Disc. concerning Lent. pag. 138.*

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relates

relates to *Rome*, has been much questioned, it being apparent from *Sozomen* (who wrote at the same time with him) That, at that time, *not 3 Weeks*, but 6 were observed in that City: The *Lent Fast*, 2d Answer is Bishop *Gunnings*', who thus reconciles that Matter, They observed (at *Rome*) the *Quadragesima* or 40 Days of *Lent*, in the general, and those 21 Days or 3 *Weeks* were appointed for *Stricter Fasting*.
in App.

Supposing yet (but not granting) that *Socrates*, (who perhaps seems the least favourable to the *Lent Fast* of any of the Ecclesiastical Writers) or any other of the Antients, should possibly deny or reject the *Tradition Apostolical* on which the 40 Days of *Lent* stand founded, this however, according to the famous Rule mentioned by the forenamed *Vincenius*, 'must pass for the *singular, obscure, and private Opinion* of one or two particular Writers or Antients, to be severed from the Authority of the *Common, Publick, and General Judgment*, and so no more allowed to prejudice the *Generality* and Consent of the Antient Fathers or Churches Records, in favour of the *Apostolicness* of the *Lent-Fast* or *Forty-Season*, than the Opinions of one or two of the Fathers of the

the Church, in behalf of the Canonical Authority of the two Books of *Maccabees*, or the 3^d of *Esdras*, or their positive rejection of the Epistles of St. *James* and St. *Jude*, can avail for the admission of the former Books into the *Canon*, or for excluding those Epistles from it †.

2dly, But our Brethren have a yet further Exception to any thing of a *Set-Fast*: it favours, they think, too much of *Judaical* Observance.

In reply hereto, it might be enough to remind the Objectors of our Saviour's Answer to the Scribes and Pharisees, when asking him *Why his Disciples fasted not*, as those of *John*; and the *Pharisees* did; The Substance of which was, that altho' it was not then a fit Season for his Disciples to practice *Fasting*, or to behave themselves like *Mourners*, whilst they were in the nature of a *Bride* at a *Wedding*, whilst He, the *Bridegroom* of their Souls was present, making an *Eternal League of Friendship* with them, yet the time wou'd come when He, their choicest Lover, shou'd be taken from them, and then shou'd they fast in

† Vid. Bp. Gunning *Lent-Fast*, pag. 132.

those Days. Where, if our Blessed Saviour meant not that they shou'd (after that Time) have *Set* and *Stated Fasts*, as well as the Disciples of *John* and the *Pharisees* had, but only, that they shou'd fast on *Accidental Extraordinary Occasions* (which our Brethren wou'd perswade us to be all his Meaning) his Words wou'd not have been an apposite or sufficient Answer to the Objection of the Scribes and Pharisees †; Nor cou'd he mean that his Disciples shou'd, after his Death, fast only on *Emergent Occasions*, since this he required of them even whilst he was with them (the only *Privileged Time* of the Churches Joy on Earth) and blamed their Omission of it when a Case of Charity and Religion called for it, as you may see *Matt. 17. 20, 21.*

But I shall yet farther satisfy this Scruple, by observing the different Nature of Christian and Jewish *Fasts.*

The Jews had their Weekly and Annual *Set* and *Returning Fasts*; viz. the former, on *Monday*, and *Thursday*;

† The Disciples of *John* and of the Pharisees (as we find by comparing *St. Matt. 9. 14.* with *St. Luke 5. 33.*) did fast *μετά, πένεα*, that is, (as it shou'd seem) much at a time (sometimes,) and often, at set *Returning Times.* Vid. *Lent-Fast*, p. 18.

the latter, such as *Esther's Fast* (on the 13th of the Month *Adar*) and the *Fasts* of the 4th, 5th, 7th, and 10th Months, with the *Fast* on the Great Day of *Atonement*, *Levit.* 26. the most solemn Observance whereof was guarded, with the Sanction of *Excision* to Offenders, *Verf.* 27. (*Whatsoever Soul it be that shall not be afflicted in that same Day, he shall be cut off from among his People;*) And farther, as has been before remembered, they had an Observance, in some sort, of 40 *Days* preparatory to that their Great Day of *Atonement*.

The Christians also had, and have their *Weekly Fasts*, their *Embers*, *Rogation Days*, their *Holiday Eves*, and the 40 *Days of Lent*, by way of Religious Preparation for the Feast of *Easter*; in which Days, the *Good-Friday* and *Holy Saturday* especially, if not the *whole Passion-Week* (those Days in which most strictly the Lord was Taken away) were, Antiently, and still are by many observed, with great Strictness and Devotion: So truly and fully is that Prediction, at least, if not Command of Christ our Saviour, made good and verified, That *in those Days, the Days* after his Departure by Death, and more particu-

larly those Days wherein He was Crucified and Slain, his Chosen Disciples, and all Christians in general, both shou'd, and wou'd *Fast*.

Thus there were *Set* and *Solemn Fasts* among the Jews; And the like are observed by Christians: So far we agree with our Adversaries: But then here lies the mighty Difference, agreeable to the † *Genius* of the two several Religions: The Jews were bound to the Observance of many of their *Fasts*, and particularly of their *Expiation-Day*, by strictest *Command* and *Terrour* of Law, as we see by the *Sanction* above-mentioned, [*The Soul that is not afflicted in that same Day, shall be cut off from among his People:*]

But it is the property of the *Grace* of the Gospel, or *Royal Law of Liberty*, to leave much to the *willing Choice* of Christian People, * (*Thy People will be willing in the Day of thy Power*; says the Prophetick Psalmist, *Psal.* 110. 2.) Whence the *Forty Days of Lent*, as also the *Weekly Passion-days*, tho' all in memory of the Death of Christ, yet proceed only, for the most

† Vid. *Paschal* or *Lent-Fast* App. p. 495, 496.

* — Neque nos severus
Terror impellit — Prud.

part, (as to the Observance of them) upon the *Recommendation* of the Apostles *received by Tradition*: There is no *Written Law* or *Precept* for their Observation; or at least there was not, till the shameful Neglect of Christians made such *Humane Injunctions* necessary. The Law of *Moses*, was a Law of *Commands*, and so had need to be *Written*: The Gospel is a *Royal Law of Liberty*, and as such has less need of *Precept*. Tho' let it be here added, That it is justly expected from Christians that they shou'd perform as much of their Religion (the very *strictest* part of it) which is so excellently suited to the Soul or nobler Faculty, upon the mere motive of *Counsel* or *Advice*, as the Jews did of their burthensom Ceremonies by the force of *Law*: The Evangelical Mercies and Benefits being of so great and transcendent a Nature as must make those who truly understand them most willingly ready to comply with all the approved Means of obtaining them.

If it be further urged, That the Law was a *School-Master of Severity* to bring Men to Christ, and that therefore the *Disciples of John* and of the *Pharisees* fasted oft; and that *John* was a Har-

binger sent by preaching of Pennance to *prepare the Way* for the *Bridegroom*, and so, for that Reason, *came neither eating nor drinking*; But that Abstinence after the Coming of the Bridegroom seems not so proper: It is answered, That, not only just before the Coming of Christ, the Jews *fasted*, but from the Beginning of their Polity. *Fasting* had a place in the *Body* of their Law, being incorporated into their Religion, and exacted under severe *Penalties*; tho' it must be owned that the Duty it self appears more agreeable to a Christian, than a Jew, whose *Promises* relate so much to *Earthly Plenty*. *Fasting* moreover was not unknown in *Paradise; There it was first brought forth, and had it been more regarded, it might have been better for the World. † *Fasting*, says St. Basil,

* Νηστεία ἐν τῷ Παραδείσῳ ἐνομοθετήθη. S. Basil. de Jejun. Serm. 1. Ταῦτα φαίη, πούτε μὴ φαίη, εἶδ' ὅτι νηστείας. S. Chrysost. Ἀρχαῖα ἡ ἢ ἐν πολλῇ, (νηστεία) ἔ' ἡμῶν ὁμοχρόνι' ὅ. Greg. Naz. Orat. 41. Εἰ ὅ ἐν Παραδείσῳ εὐαγγελιστὴς ἡ νηστεία, πολλῶ μᾶλλον ἐκτὸς ἔ' Παραδείσου. Εἰ ὅτι τῆς πληγῆς χρήσιμον τὸ φάρμακον πολλῶ μᾶλλον μὲν τῷ πληγῇ. S. Chrys. tom. 6. λογ. πζ'. (If this Physick (of Fasting) were useful before our Wound, (in Paradise,) much more after it.

† Ἀρχαῖον δῶρον ἡ νηστεία — Καὶ νόμος πρὸς ἐπιτήδευσιν. Πατέρων ἐπὶ κειμήλιον — δυσωπήθητι τὴν πολιὰν τῆς νηστείας, ἡλικιωτίς ἐστὶ τῆς ἀνθρωπότητος. S. Bas. Serm. 1. de Jejun.

is an ancient Gift, elder than the Law; it is a Jewel of the Ancient Fathers; reverence its grey hairs, it is coetaneous with Mankind: And all the Time, says Venerable Bede (our Country Man) before Christ's Coming and after his Ascension, was the Season of the Churches Mourning.

They who do yet oppose the *Paschal Fast*, and other *Fasts* of the Church because they are *set* or *stated Fasts*, wou'd do well to consider, 1st. That unless the Days for *Christian Fasting* were fixt and appointed, the Church cou'd not agree, by a blessed † Uniformity, to observe those Days together, and by that Means to pray for, and with one another, all at the same Time: Besides, that *fixing the Time for any Duty tends only* (as Dr. Hammond speaks) *to the securing the Observance of it against the frailties of Men and Disturbances of the World;*

† Quamvis enim pulchrum sit atque laudibile ut singula quæque membra Corporis Christi propriis ornentur officiis, excellentioris tamen est actionis sacratorisque Virtutis, cum in unum propositum piæ plebis corda concurrunt, ut ille (Diabolus) cui Sanctificatio nostra supplicium est, non solum à parte, sed etiam à Soliditate superetur. Leo. Serm. de Jejun,

Info.

Insomuch that were there no Days appointed, 'tis very likely we should come in time to have no Duty perform'd.

S. Matt.
xv.

Again, For that Objection, That the making of *Laws* or *Canons* for the observing any Days of *Fasting*, is the same fault which our Saviour condemned in the *Pharisees* of teaching for *Doctrines the Commandments* (or *Injunctions*) of *Men*: This is a gross Mistake; Our Blessed Saviour, by that Phrase meant only the *Teaching* that for a *Law* or Command of God which was merely an *Humane Invention*, or the setting up such an *Invention* or *Tradition* to the evacuating the *Divine Law*; This was what he censured those *Pharisees* for, and gave an Instance of it in their frustrating the Vth Commandment of *honouring Parents*, (which implied a relieving them in their Wants,) by that vain and impious Tradition, grounded on no warrant of Scripture, That if a Son did but *bind* himself by any Oath or Execration that he wou'd not relieve his indigent Parent, he was no longer obliged to do it by the *Fifth Commandment of the Law*; Thus directly making void the *First Commandment*
with

with Promise, by their Traditions: But certainly the appointing *set* and solemn Times for the practice of holy *Fasting* is by no means any such Crime as this; since it is very far from making that to be a Law of God which is only the Institution of Man, or the setting up Humane Inventions to the prejudice of any Divine Précept; Our Laws about *Fasting* having been enacted only with a pious Design of bringing Men (the Slothful especially) to the performance of those Things which the Church well knew to be the Mind of Christ, or of making what was evidently a Duty before to be more religiously and carefully observed.

Lastly, 'Tis strange that any *Christian* should alledge that Text of St. Paul, *Stand fast in the Liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free*, as an Argument for not observing the Publick *Fasts* appointed (as to the Times and Seasons of them) by the Civil, or Ecclesiastick Power; when the same Apostle has so plainly and fully declared it to be the Duty of all *Christians* to submit to every Ordinance of Man for the Lords sake; and when 'tis also so clear, that in the Chapter alledg'd

St.

St. Paul speaks only of a *freedom* from the Yoke of Circumcision, and the like *Jewish* Observances. Should indeed any heretical Governor or Consistory command the Observance of 3 *Lent-Fasts* in the Year, as † *Montanus*, we know, imposed on his Followers, as if there were 3 Saviours or 3 Bridegrooms whose Death to bewail, we might then justly, upon the Rule of complying only in *licitis*, and by virtue of our *Christian Liberty*, decline our active Obedience: But when the Church enjoins only one *Antepaschal-Fast*, and that with so much Moderation and Indulgence to Mens Infirmities, as hath been mentioned, he that shall scruple to comply with this Duty, on pretence of his *Christian Liberty*, as if that had set him *free* from any such religious Burthen, does plainly and directly what St. Paul cautions against, I mean, *make use of his Liberty for a cloak of Maliciousness, or as an Occa-*

* Illi tres in anno faciunt Quadragesimas, quasi tres passi sint Salvatores. S. Hieron. ad Marcell. One of these 3 Lents they kept after Pentecost; Montanus, Priscilla, & Maximilla etiam post Pentecosteu faciunt Quadragesimam: Id. in Matt. 9. Their other 2 Lents, (besides the Paschal one, which lasted a Fortnight) were of a Week each, excepting the Saturdays and Sundays, and were kept when their 2 Yearly Synods were held. Vid. Tertul. cap. 13. & 14. And Disc. of Lent. p. 65,

sion to the Flesh, and shews such a Contempt of the Churches Authority, and the Practice of *Christians* in all Ages, as we cannot easily suppose a greater Fault of this Nature.

Let me add, with respect to *Christian* Princes and their Injunctions of this sort, That being in Scripture denominated *Nursing Fathers* to the Church, they cannot, sure, be supposed to be entrusted with a less Power than this of Ordering, upon Occasion, so small a thing as the Churches *Diet*; nor can any therefore without great Disobedience slight and contemn their Orders: Which, whoever shall presume to do, and notwithstanding such plain Arguments as these, reject the *Fasts* appointed by Authority (whether Sacred or Civil) merely because they are *stated*, he has (as Bishop Gunning somewere speaks) double Reason to *fast*, both to *teach him Humility*, as well as to *deny his Appetites*.

As to that trite Cavil, That keeping *Set Days* of Fasting or Abstinence, is to do what the Apostle expressly forbids; *to observe Days*, and *Times*, and *Months*, and *Years*; Let it be enough to say That the Apostle in that place only censures
the

the *Galatian Christians* for observing *Days, &c.* besides what where appointed of God under the Gospel, even their old *Jewish* Observances, which made him fear they wou'd revert to Judaism again; but he never blamed them for regarding the † stated *Fasts* and *Feasts* of Christianity, which they could not neglect without doing wrong both to Religion and themselves.

I may therefore upon the Whole, I suppose, safely conclude, That our *Presbyterian* Dissenters, who refuse the *Christian* Ordinance of *set, stated, Annual, and Weekly-returning Fasts*, as a *Superstitious, or Judaical* Observance, do but shew themselves by their pretended *tenderness*, or rather *weakness* of Conscience, to be like the *old Bottles*, our Saviour speaks of, that wou'd *fly and break* when any *new, or strong, spiritul* Liquor was *put* into them, and that they are *such as have more need of Milk. than of strong Meat.*

† Quòd si nova Conditio in Christo; jam & nova Solemnia esse debent. Aut si omnem in totum Devotionem temporum & dierum, & mensium, & annorum erasit Apostolus; Cur Pascha celebramus annuo circulo in Mense primo? &c. Tertul. de *Jejun.* c. 14.

If it be here asked Whether from any thing that has been advanc'd above, it follows That the *Lent-Fast* is to be reputed of *Divine* Authority in the Church: I answer, as I have learn'd from a† good Hand, by this Distinction; * *Bishop Gunning Lent-Fast. p. 60. & 479.* That some *Antepaschal-Fast*, or penitential *Preparation* before *Easter*, as fasting the most holy *Passion-Week*, or at the least, the *Good-Friday* and *Holy Saturday* preceding that Feast, is to be esteemed of *Divine* Authority, Because, taking in the Churches Interpretation of these Words of our Saviour, *Then shall they fast (or mourn) in those Days* (Ὁ ἐνεύχαις ταῖς ἡμέραις) there is (or we have) *expressum Præceptum divinum*, an express divine Command for such Observance; And so * the Churches Testimony in *Tertullian* refers the *Paschal Fast*, in this Sense, to an Institution from God, and from the Gospel, calling the Days of Fasting, observed of all before *Easter*, *certos dies a Deo constitutos*, certain Days

* Nam quod ad Jejunia pertineat, *Certos dies à Deo constitutos* opponunt, says *Tertullian* of the Catholics, when he sums up their Charge against himself and his Party. And again, *Certè in Evangelio illos dies Jejunii determinatos putant, in quibus ablati sunt Sponsus. Tertul. de Jejun. c. 1, 2.*

ordained

ordained of God for that purpose: But the extending or prolonging the Fast to just 40 Days, is to be ascribed to Tradition Apostolical, and Constitution Ecclesiastical.

† *Paschal*
or *Lent-*
Fast. pag.
488.

Shou'd it be farther scrupled, whether the Church can have a Power to command the observance of the 40 Days of *Lent* by Canonical Injunction and Penal Laws, which came delivered to the Primitive *Christians*, only by *Recommendation Apostolical*; Hear the Opinion of the forenamed † *Prelate* in this Case, “ Even Laws Apostolical, “ in some sort, may, by the Churches “ Governors, be reinforced, pressed, “ and invigorated in New Canons, “ Sanctions, and *Decrees*, where they “ shall see it needful; Much more “ things which descend from *Recom-* “ *mendation Apostolical*, may, upon some “ appearing emergent Occasion, be by “ them made *Laws Ecclesiastical*, for “ some Times and Places. ‡ And this is

‡ That in the Primitive Church (before Christian Kings were given to it) Bishops, the Successors of the Apostles had a Power of indicting Fasts, as occasion served, appears from the Testimony of Tertullian, above cited, pag. 83. And that they could also, if they pleased, make such Fasts perpetual, is evident from what hath been before observed.

no more than what he there professes to have learn'd from St. Chrysostom, who, in one of his Homilies tells his Auditors, *That many of old having been wont to come to the Mysteries, or Sacrament indifferently, and at adventure (as if simply to come only and eat were sufficient) especially at the Season of Easter, or the Great Week, in which Christ delivered it, ‡ the Fathers therefore (says he) knowing well and being aware of the harm which proceeds from such careless Communicating, meeting together have prescribed 40 Days of Fasting, that all of us together, being in these Days purified with all diligent Care, both by Prayers and by Alms, and by Fasting, and by whole-Nights-Watches, and by Tears, and by Confession, and by all other Means, might come to the Sacrament with a pure Conscience, so*

pag. 42, 43. of Holiday-Eves, and the three Rogation-Days begun at first about the Year 490. and continued in the Church ever since.

To these Instances of the Churches Power in appointing Fasts, may be added that in imitation of the most Solemn Vigil of the Eve before Easter, the Churches of Spain first, and afterward the Roman and others converted the every Weeks Vigil of the Lords-Day, viz. Saturday, into a Weekly Fasting-Day, in the place of Wednesday, or the 4th Day of the Week, which from the beginning had been so employ'd. Vid. Paschal or Lent-Fast. pag. 437.

‡ Οἱ Πατέρες συναθρόντες ἐτύπωσαν ἡμέρας τεσσαράκοντα, νηστίας, &c. Hom. εἰς τὰς τὴν πρῶτην πύλιναν νηστειοῦταις. λογ. 27.

far as is possible. And St. Chrysostom adds, *That it was evident they had wrought great Reformation and Good thereby, in working Men to a Habit and Custom of Fasting.* The Church may therefore sometimes with good Reason enact some Things into *Laws*, which were at first grounded on no more than *Tradition Apostolical*; tho' it were much to be wisht, that the pious Care of *Christians* had prevented all such Necessity, and that the bare *Recommendation* of the Apostles had (as it ought) proved sufficient to perswade Men to this Duty.

And let thus much be enlarged for the Use of the † *Aerians* of our Age.

The last Objection against our *Lent-Fast*, and perhaps, the most difficult to get over, is, That of *Humane Nature*; which is very apt to say, That to be under any tie of Abstinence for 40 *Days* together, and that too in the *Spring-time* of the Year, when we

† *Aëriani* ab *Aërio* quodam nominati, qui assererat nec statuta solenniter celebranda esse *jejunia*, sed cum quisque voluerit *jejunandum*, ne videatur esse sub *Lege*: Dicebat etiam Presbyterum ab Episcopo nullâ differentiâ debere discerni. S. *Aug.* Lib, de Hæres. N. 53.

The same Sect would fast on Sundays, and feast on Fridays, to cross the Catholics. Epiph. adv. *Aërium*.
shou'd

thou'd be recreating and recruiting our selves after the injuries of the Winter, is a hard Task and a Burden too heavy to be born.

“ This complaint (says † Bishop
 “ *Gunning*) cou'd not be more impro-
 “ perly made against any Master, or Lent-Fast;
 “ any Text, or any Interpreter of this pag. 154.
 “ Text, than against our Gracious Ma-
 “ ster in his Words *Luke v. 35.*
 “ (whence the Designation of *Lent* is
 “ taken) and the Churches Interpre-
 “ tation of those Words. How ten-
 “ der, how considering was He of the
 “ Infirmary and Weakness of his Dis-
 “ ciples? Excusing that in them, which
 “ *John* did not in his. How careful
 “ that *no bruised Reeds, no old Bottles*
 “ should be broken by any rough U-
 “ sage? That in the old and attrite
 “ Garment the rent should not be made
 “ worse; That no * *Schism* or *Divi-*
 “ *sion*, that is, should be caused in the
 “ Church by any unreasonable Severi-
 “ ty? *Yea, and therefore is our Lord*
 “ *thus indulgent to his Disciples Infir-*
 “ *mity* (says *St. Chrysostom*) *to set*
 “ *them an Example, whom he inten-*

* Divisio in mente Discipuli recentis & infirmi; aut Schisma & Separatio à reliquis fratribus.

“ *ded to send forth as the Masters,*
 “ *Teachers, and Spiritual Governors of*
 “ *the whole World, that they might gently*
 “ *lead those which were with young,*
 “ *and drive as all the Flock could go.*

The Words also of the forecited Text are so expressed as to make it doubtful (at first sight) whether they were designed for a *Command*, or a *Prediction* only of the Churches *Fasting*; and from the uncertain sense of τὸτε νηστεύουσιν, *then shall they, or will they fast*, it seems manifest that our Blessed Lord had rather all his Followers wou'd *fast* of their own free Choice, than as compelled by Law. And the Church in her Exposition of those Words is so mild and merciful; that although, on the most cogent Reasons, she thought fit to extend the full Meaning of them to a *40 Days Abstinence*, yet, if we may judge by the Practice of the Primitive Church, she presses the strict Observance of no more than 6 or 7 of those Days, the most Holy *Passion Week* only, if somuch, on all her Children, for *Necessary Fasting*, being content to recommend the Devotion of the other Days by her mere Advice and Counsel to the prudence of *Christians*, as they, considering the strength of
 their

their Bodies, and more especially the State of their Souls, and other Circumstances, shall think fit to practise, in the fear of God. “ In every Age “ (says Bishop *Gunning*) the Church “ and the Successors of the Apostles “ have had (in this Matter) regard “ to the Weakness of Mens Bodies, “ yea and Minds also. In her † first “ express written Law that was pro- “ mulged for a *Lent-Fast*, this restri- “ ction was inserted, *If bodily Weak- “ ness hinders not.* And the indulged Variety in this Duty, so much mentioned in ancient Authors, (by which some fasted more Days, or Weeks of the *Paschal-Season*; some fewer; some within the *Abstinence* of the 40 Days, choosing out 15 Days, as in the *East*; others, as in the *West*, 21. for stricter *Fasting*;) the same Great Man observes to have proceeded from the Churches tenderness and condescension to the different Abilities of Mens Minds, as well as Bodies (in respect to which there will be always some *babes in Christ*, some *young men*, some *Fathers*, some *weak*, some *Strong*, some *old*, some *New Bottles* and *Garments*;) and not from the uncertainty or variety of *Tradition* as to the Measures of *Fasting*. “ Our ten-

Vid. *Lent-Fast.* pag. 155.

† Εἰ μὴ διὰ τὴν ἀνάγκην τῆς σαρκὸς ἢ τοῦ νοῦ. Can. Apost. 69.

“ der Mother the Church (says the
 “ same * holy Man) considers her
 “ Childrens Strength, as Christ did
 “ the Children of his Bridechamber;
 “ she has her Exceptions and Relaxa-
 “ tions for the Sick and Weak, for
 “ Children and Aged, Prisoners, and
 “ Labourers, Women with child, and
 “ Travellers, and in her Compassion
 “ seems to bear about another Passion
 “ with that of her own *Fasting in Lent* :
 Whence (as He goes on) there were
 wont to be reckoned four allowed Rea-
 sons for not *Fasting* ; † 1. *Infirmity of*
Body, 2. *Ordinary Want of Diet* (thro’
Poverty ;) 3. *Necessity of greater La-*
bour ; 4. *The Occasion of doing some*
greater Good, by dispensing with the *Fast* ;
 To which some have added the *Exces-*
siveness of the Heat, in some Regions,
 for some *hotter* Months in the Year.
 ‡ Such Care was taken for the Con-
 tentment and Welfare of all the Mem-

* Bishop Gunning, *Lent-Fast* pag. 157.

† 1. Impotentia corporis ; 2. Ex paupertate, indigen-
 tia ordinaria Ciborum ; 3. Necessitas laboris majoris ;
 4. Pietas boni melioris ; 5. Intempestas caloris. †

‡ Christ fasted 40 Days (says St. Greg. Nazianz.)
 Θεὸς γὰρ ἡμῶν ἡμεῖς δὲ τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ τὸ το σὺνμετρέησμεν, But
 we proportionate this to our Strength.

Prudentius speaking of Christ's fasting 40 Days, and of the
 measure to be observed by Christians, thus sings,

Hoc nos sequamur quisque nunc pro viribus.

Hym. 7. *Jejunan.*

bers of the Church, and for the Ease of their Minds, when any of the recited *Excuses* happened to be their Case. But yet let us be sure to take this along with us, That tho' all were not Anciently obliged to *Fast* in the Season proper for that Duty, yet Abstinence from Pleasures and Feasts, otherwise lawful, from Delicacies, and Fullness, was expected from All, whether Well or Sick, Rich or Poor, Youthful or Aged, through the whole 40 *Days of Lent*, in honourable Memory of the Bridegroom, who fasted \pm 40 *Days* and 40 *Nights*, and at last shed his Blood for us; And from all who were able (as far as they were able) some Days of proper *Fasting*.

Those who at present find themselves through Infirmary unable to *fast*, let them yet hear St. *Chrysostom's* Advertisment; *Though thou canst not Fast,*

And Hymn 8.

Iaxus & Liber modus *Abstinendi*
Ponitur cunctis—sua quemque cogit
velle *Potestas*.

Unusquisque, in quantum Virtus suppetit, carnem maceret, ejusque desideria affligat. *Gregor. Hom. 16.*

‡ *Whatever variety of Fasting there was in several Countries, according to the Difference of fainter Regions, or hotter Stomachs, or perpetual Labour, yet a Τεσσαρακοστή or Quadragesima was Universally owned, with allowance of Variation in the Number of their stricter Fasting-Days, and in the rigour of their Abstinence. Vid. Bishop Guinnings L. E. App. p. 507.*

I 4

That

yet canst thou not forbear pampering thy Body? If thou hast a weak Body, so that thou canst not continue in Fastings, yet happily it is not weak to Prayer, nor unable certainly to despise the Pleasures of Fulness. Nor is this diminishing the quantity or quality of thy Diet of little Moment, but oft avails to the weakning of the Devil's Power. Those who make shift to Mortify only a few Days in Lent, let it add to their Pennance to be told many firmer † Vessels in the Primitive Church held the *stronger liquor* of the 40 Days Fast; and let them remember that generally all in those Days did by some sort of *Abstinence* through the whole *Forty-Season* prepare themselves for the *Paschal-Feast*, with much advantage to their Minds, and (commonly) no harm to their Bodies.

Yet, there are who will not be persuaded but that *Fasting* is an evil Custom, injurious to Health, or a good Habit of Body.

† S. Ambrose says, they fasted at Milan all the time of Lent, except Sundays and Saturdays. Lib. de Eliâ & Jejun. Vid. du Pin Vol. 2. p. 203.

And S. Augustin relates, That he was credibly informed (though 'tis hard to be believed) that a certain Person had continued Fasting full Forty Days. Epist. 36. ad Casul. Vid. du Pin. Vol. 3. pag. 139

In answer hereto, I desire to observe first, in general, That what is here said, seems to be ill offered in a Country where the Inhabitants are known even to a Proverb, *To dig their Graves with their Teeth*, and where so many Thousands suffer even to Death by a plethorick Habit of Body. But, 2dly I reply, As to the former part of this Objection (especially) that were it well grounded it would indeed be Considerable, because (whether we are careful or not to do so) it should be the Endeavour of all to keep their Bodies in a Working Condition: But it does not appear that *Fasting* is prejudicial to bodily Health; *Nay rather, if thou wouldst exactly search the Matter* (says † St. Chrysostom) *thou wouldst find it the* † Λογ. πζ. *Mother of Health, or a good Habit of* ^{ἡ υἱαία α.} *Body: And if thou believest not me, ask the Sons of the Physicians, and they will tell thee more clearly.* And Theodoret on *Dan. 1.* hath instructed us, from the History of the *Hebrew Children*, their being fed with *Pulse and Water*, instead of the Kings Meat, and from the eminent Success thereof, *That bodily Strength and Comeliness may gain by the use of Fasting:* And to give some satisfaction in this place to a common
Scruple

Scruple. That to go abroad *fasting* is Unwholesom, let me here mention the Opinion of a *good Judge in such Cases; Who, on account of our Northern Air, allows the taking a small quantity of some ordinary thing on our *fasting Days* to keep the Body from being unserviceable to the Mind, and for preserving the Health: Which if it be a Work of Necessity, or Mercy, no doubt is allowable, and we may say of such *breaking the Fast*, in the Words of the

¹Cor. viij. 8. Apostle, *Neither if we (so) eat are we the worse.*

For the Lamentation about the *Spring-Season*, the (supposed) too great Confinement for that pleasant-wholesome Part of the Year; no tender Maid needs be offended at our Law of *Fasting*. Who hinders thee, O careless Virgin, from taking a private or (sometimes) freer Walk for the refreshment of Nature, and to contemplate the Wonders of Providence in the first buddings of the Plants and Trees, and early Dawnings of the Year? But make not vain Assignations with thy Lovers, nor lavish too much Time

* *Bishop Patrick's Treatise on the Lent-Fast.*

in pursuit of thy Health, remembering that thou hast (now) a greater Work upon thy hands; that the *Season of Lent* is the † *Spiritual Spring of the Soul*, and that it is the design of our *Fast-Days* that in them Sensual Pleasures may die, and Vertues bud forth in us, and especially that the most lovely Beauty of Chastity may put forth it self: That having, in the Exercise of the *Spring-Fast*, prepared ourselves by holy Purifications, and adorned our minds with the Jewels of Christian Graces, we may at *Easter*, from waiting our on Lord's Resurrection, return with an ample Reward, a portion of his Grace, the Gift of his Spirit, faintly shadowed by the *Manna* in the Desert, or the *Cluster of Grapes*, which those who went out of the Wilderness to *search* the Promised Land, brought back with them,

† Ὁ τῆς νηστίας καμρὸς (ἡ Τεσσαρακοστὴ) τὸ πινδυμναπικόν
 * ψυχῶν ἔαρ. S. Chrysost. Λογ. α. ἐν ἀρχῇ τῆς τεσσαρακ.
The very best when the Spiritual Summer of Lent appears
 (says the same S. Chrysost.) *may like Souldiers wipe off the*
dust from their Arms, τὰ ὅπλα ἀποσμηξάσαι. Serm. 16.
 ad Pop. Antioch.

The Example of Asella, a very holy Virgin, spoken of by
 S. Hierom, *will be properly mentioned here. who, as in all*
her Life she almost continually fasted, spending sometimes
two, sometimes three Days in fasting; so especially in Lent,
she let loose the reins to Abstinence: Cum per omnem
etatem, &c. S. Hieron. Epist. 15.

though

though of such Largeness as to be borne between Two.

Let me here add, that in any Matter of Duty, we should not be too nice in the business of Health, but rather do too much than too little for our Srength, leaving something to the Care and good Providence of God, and not forgetting to pray to Him to enable us to do more than we think we can do. † 'Tis related of the Reverend Dr. *Hammond*, That, *under great bodily Infirmities*, he would *Preach constantly every Sunday*, and that many times, when he was in so ill a Condition of Health, that all besides himself thought it impossible, at least very unfit for him to do it: Nor would he suffer an infectious Distemper to interrupt his Visit to a sick Person, saying, *That he should be as much in God's hands in the sick Man's Chamber, as in his own.* Let us at every Revolution of Lent (says St. Basil) pray to God to grant unto us, as *Combatants entering upon our Race*, ‡ the firmness and intention of Perseverance, that we may

† Dr Hammond's Life by Bishop Fell. p. 166. 172.

‡ Τὸ σπέρρον καὶ εὐτόνον τῆς καρτείας, φθάσαι καὶ ἐπὶ τῇ κυρίῳ τῷ σφάτει ἡμῶν. Hom. 1. de Jejun.

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attain unto the Day which is proper for Rewards. St. Ambrose, in one of his Sermons about Fasting, thus preaches towards the end of Lent, * Behold thro' the Mercies of God, we have thus far fulfilled the enjoyned Devotion of Abstinence. I admonish you (says † Cæsarius Bishop of Arles to his Auditors) I admonish you of Love, most dear Brethren, that during the whole Lent, you keep yourselves, through God's help, in Purity. And ‡ God giving us Strength (says Theophilus of Alexandria) let us fast more carefully on the Great Week. These are all good Advertisements to us, to beg God's Assistance, in the most wholesome Season of Lent, and on all Occasions of Fasting to enable us to out-do ourselves: And for those who cannot, or will not use such Endeavours, nor pay any due regard to the established Fasts, let them yet beware that they do not reproach the Duty,

* Quadragesimæ indicta Jejunia, ecce jam penè transigimus, propitiâ Divinitate.

† Rogo vos, Fratres charissimi, & Charitatis contemplatione commoneo, ut per totam Quadragesimam Castitatem, Deo auxiliante, servetis. Hom. 2. de Quadrag.

‡ Deo prabente vires, Hebdomadæ Majoris diebus, attentius Jejunemus. Epist. Pasch. 2.

lest

lest (as the forecited **St. Basil* speaks) *It accuse them before the Lawgiver of the Fasts, and bring upon them a manifold Mulct, either from weak Estate of Body, or some other sad Accident.*

And to the former I would say one word more, to those, I mean, who thro' bodily Infirmary are unable to *fast* and afflict the Body, which perhaps is already enough afflicted; let such however (as One speaks) be liberal in confessing, That it is † *from their own Weakness that* they dispence with the Duty, and let them *redeem by Alms-deeds what is wanting in Fastings.*

And thus I have endeavoured to state the true *Measures, and Manner* of Christian *Fasting*, and to clear the way to the Duty, by removing those Obstacles which the Partiality and Perverseness of some, or Weakness of others, have raised against it; and also, by the way observing, that gracious ἐπιείκεια, or *gentleness*, that Indulgence or Forbearance which the

* Μὴ καθυβρίσης τὴν νηστείαν, μήποτε σε καταγγέλῃ ἐπὶ τῷ Νομοθέτῃ τῶν νηστιῶν, καὶ πολλαπλασίωνα σοὶ ἐπαγγέλῃ ὀνειδισμὸν, ἢ ἐξ ἀρρωστίας σώματος, ἢ ἐξ ἄλλης πρὸς σκυθρωπῆς ὡς αἰσίου. Sermon. 2. de Jejun.

† Fateantur esse fragilitatis propriae, quod relaxant, & redimant Eleemosynis quod non possunt supplere Jejuniis. Chrysost. Sermon. 166. de Quadrages.

Church makes in this Matter on all just Occasions. And Oh! that I could now speak with the Voice of a Trumpet, that I might shew *Jerusalem her Transgression, and the House of Jacob her Sin*; since it is but too notorious that the Generality of this Nation are guilty of a Negligence herein by no means consistent with the Sacred Institution: Who, when in Obedience to the Orders of their Superiours, and Ecclesiastical Injunction, they shou'd be correcting their Lives and improving themselves in Religion, by holy *Fasting and Abstinence, on set and stated Days*, they think of nothing less but *the Harp, and the Viol, the Tabret, and the Pipe, and Wine are in their Feasts*, and they go on, Month after Month, and Year after Year without any due Regard to this most useful and necessary Duty, which may be called the *Introduction* to an holy Life, according to that of St. Basil, † *Fasting is the beginning of Repentance*. I cannot but think that unbridled Looseness which, like a Flood, seems to have overspread the Nation, is very much owing to the contempt of this Duty of

Isai. 5. 12.

† Ἀρχὴ μετανοίας νηστία. Serm. 1. de Jejun.

Fasting;

Fasting; and because Men have not yet learned to *retire* for the sake of amending their Lives, and (in order to it) considering the true Nature of Things, how vain and worthless all Earthly Enjoyments are, and how infinitely surpassed by those which Christians are made to expect. Indeed this Neglect of *Christian Fasting*, by the Generality and Impunity of it, seems to become a National Sin, and such, we know seldom or never go without a Publick Punishment. 'Tis a general Observation, I think, that the Course of the Seasons have, for many Years, been very unkindly, and, as a Natural Consequence, that our Fruits have proved half-ripe or scant in measure, and that Men have generally suffered, in proportion, in their Health. No doubt but Sufferings of all sorts ought to remind us of our Sins: And why may not our Neglect of the *Church-Fasts* be seasonably remembred on this Occasion? And be allowed as one Cause, at least, of this Judgment? As if because we wou'd not *fast* as we ought, Almighty God had resolved that we shou'd not *feast*, as we were wont to do, and intended to mind us of our Sin by our Punishment. But
what-

whatever may have been the Occasion of this Scourge, there is no doubt but a general Reformation, as to the Duty, wou'd be one effectual Means of removing this, and whatever other Chastisements we may lye under; Especially that of a long and bloody War. Our Governours, we thank them, have, since the War, done something to purpose in their Injunctions of *Publick Fasts*; but still, verily *there is utterly a fault among us*, in the too common neglect of the Church's Orders, and the Intimations and Directions of Scripture about *Private Fasting*, as if that Duty had no place in our Saviour's Divine Sermon on the Mount, or in the Gospel. I have before observed the Power of Religious *Fasting* for removing of Judgments, and need not stay here to prove they are the Sins of Men that bring down God's Wrath on Nations in general, and on private Persons. Because the Jews wou'd not suffer their Land to *rest*, or lye untill'd *even* - Levit. 26. *ry seventh Year*, according to God's³⁴ Command, but from a covetous Humour, and distrust of Divine Providence, wou'd *work* it on that Year also, and exact all the Profits, we read, that as God, by a most sharp prophetick

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Verf. 35. Reproach had threatned them, so he did, he made their *Land to enjoy her Sabbath* or *Sabbatick Years*, even for *Seventy Years* together, whilst that People, by *Salmanasar* and *Nebuchadnezzar*, remained captive in *Babylon*, and their *Land* in the mean time *lay desolate* and unoccupied, and *their Cities waste*; To which they were restored again only by the severe Devotion of *Daniel* and other holy Men, who by *Prayer* and *Fasting* set themselves to seek of the Lord their God a Gracious Return.

Dan. ix. 3. We have grievously offended God by *robbing him* many Years of his Christian expected Sacrifice of *Fasting*; for which profane Neglect ('tis likely) he has † punished us with such unwholesom unfruitful Seasons, denying to *our Hearts* that *Food and Gladness*, which they formerly enjoyed: And the only way to retrieve his Favour is by a Re-

† God, says St. Chrysostom, enjoined some sort of Fasting in Paradise (*Ταῦτα φάγε, τὰς μὴ φάγε, σιδε νομίαι*: Of these thou mayest eat; This thou shalt not eat; a sort of Fast precribed:) Which being not observed, but Man would eat of the Forbidden Tree, God in displeasure cursed the Ground for his sake. (The Earth also of his Flesh, adds Bp Gunning, bringing forth troublesome Thorns and Thistles, not to be kept under without pains and labour.)

Leat Fast, pag. 215.

turn to the Duty. And, O merciful God! Cou'd we but in truth, *seek thy Favour*, as we ought, Thou art *near* to be found, and *we shou'd not be sent empty away*; and cou'd we but preserve a Rational Regard to all thy Precepts, and especially to this most highly useful and salutary one of holy *Fasting*, how shou'd we abound with Blessings? Not *one Word* of all thy good *Promise* cou'd fail, but we shou'd receive an *open Reward*, as thou, O Lord, hast promised, for thou art *faithful*, and canst not deny *Thy self*; But be-
Ver. x, &c.
cause we have not obeyed thy Voice, to walk in thy Laws which thou didst set before us by thine own Son in our Nature, (Yea, all Israel have transgressed thy Law, even by departing, that they might not obey thy Voice,) therefore the Curse is poured upon us, and the Oath that is written in the Gospel of Jesus Christ, because we have sinned against Thee; even thy just Displeasure is rendred to every Soul of Man that hath done this Evil: We have sown Much, and bring in little; We eat, but we have not enough; We drink, but we are not filled with drink; We cloath us, but there is none warm; and he that earneth wages, earneth wages to put it

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into a bag with holes: We looked for much, and lo, it came to little; and when we brought it home, thou didst blow upon it; Why? Because when thou didst send us Grass in our Fields, that we might eat and be full, and didst fill our Hearts with Food and Gladness, instead of remembring thy Appointed Fasts as our Duty required, and for the Good of our Souls, we fell to committing Adultery, assembling our selves by troops in the Harlots houses; With Jesurun, we waxed fat and kicked; when we were covered with fatness, we became unmindful of the Rock that begat us, and have forgotten the God that formed us: Therefore, O Lord, hast thou justly abhorred us, because of the provoking of thy Sons and Daughters; Thou hast justly hidden thy Face from us, and said, I will see what their End shall be. But, O Lord our God, Righteousness belongeth unto Thee, but unto us Confusion of faces as at this Day; O Lord, to us belongeth Confusion of face, to our Kings, to our Princes, and to our Fathers, because we have sinned against Thee: To the Lord our God belong Mercies and Forgivenesses, though we have rebelled against him: Be not angry, O Lord, for ever; do not afflict us very sore: But
grant

grant that by thy Chastisements we may be led to thy Mercies.

To dispose us the better to a Compliance with this Duty; Let us frequently consider the great Usefulness and indispensable † Necessity of it; that without the Practice of holy *Fasting*, and *Retirement*, it will be utterly impracticable for us ever to perform our Christian Course with Success. The state of a Christian (as we have seen) is a perpetual Exercise, a Wrestling and *Warfare*, a perilous Contention for an *Unfading Crown*, and he that *striveth for this Mastery must be temperate (or continent) in all Things*. Now a sense of absolute Necessity in any Case, as also the great Price of the Thing contended for, uses effectually to excite our Endeavours of surmounting many Difficulties which lie in the

† Christ compares Fasting indeed but to *ἐπιβλυσαι*, a piece Luke v. 38. to mend up; but this piecing must be made, since we rent the Garment of our Original Righteousness; and so long as it is in the Absence of the Bridegroom that we wear it, What matter? Bp Gunning, Lent-Fast, Append.

'Tis true the Old Wine of Original Love and Righteousness is better than the New Wine of Abstinence and Repentance, which yet we drink with some pleasure in hopes to regain our First Estate; but till that be done, this New Wine must be drank and digested. Ibid.

Way to such Ends. And so it would do here more than any where else, did we but suffer these Considerations to have their due effect on our Minds.

Let us also believe that the chief Difficulty in this Matter, is at the Beginning: It may perhaps, at the first, seem something irksome and melancholy to one who has been long habituated to the Delights and Gayety of Company, and other secular Pleasures, to *Retire*; but Use and Custom will soon reconcile this Strangeness to us: *Cella perpetuat a dulcescit; The frequented Closet grows pleasant*: We here meet with such ‡ *Spiritual Dainties* as feast the Soul beyond any other Delights, and experimentally teach us the Meaning of those Words, *Man shall not live by*

‡ *Christus non habebat delitias corporis, sed Dei Spiritus: Christ, says St. Hierom, (speaking of his 40 Days Fast) was not filled with carnal Delights, but with those of the Spirit.*

Theophilus of Alexandria calls the Fast-Days, *Supernæ lætitiæ Festa, The Solemnities of the Heavenly Joy*; Festinamus, says he, *supernæ lætitiæ Festa celebrare, terrarum humilia deserentes.* 1. Pasch. Epif.

St. Hierom speaking of the Lent-Fast, says, *In quâ conceditur districtius vivere, In which we have leave granted us to live more severely.*

And Bp Gunning to the same purpose, The Quadragesimal Fast hath a Goodly space and Lovely recommendation, for our Exercise therein. App. p. 446.

Bread

Bread alone. This soon makes us fall in Love with *Retirement*, especially after we are arrived at a full Perswasion that this withdrawing from the World will bring us at last to the presence of God Himself, the top and perfection of all Happiness. When therefore we are solicited to neglect our *Retirements*, let us overcome the Temptation by this Reflection, That our *Closet* or *Chamber* at such a time is * the *Streight gate that leads to Life*; and with this Thought in our Minds, let us boldly enter in, and strive for *incorruptible Rewards*. The very Heathen Moralists, by the dim light of Nature, cou'd represent the way to Virtue and Happiness to lye over *a rough unfrequented Path*, at the end of which there was *a narrow Wicket*, which when pass'd through, the Candidate for Glory had still *a very steep difficult Hill* to climb, with *a Precipice* on each side, before he cou'd attain to *the Seat of Bliss*.

* St. Chrysostom calls the Observation of holy Fasting, ὁδοποιεῖν τὴν εἰς τὸ ὕψος φέρουσαν, τὴν πηλὴν μὲν ὁδὸν ἔχουσαν, The streight or narrow way that leads to Heaven. Serm. 6. ad Pop. Antioch.

1. Ὁδὸς τραχεῖα καὶ πετρῶδης.

2. Οὐροὶ μικροί.

3. Βυθὸς ὑψηλός, ἔσχατος γὰρ πᾶν ἔκρημα ἔχουσι ὕδωρ καὶ ἔστιν βαθεῖς.

4. Εὐδαιμόνων οἰκητήριον. Tab. Ceb. p. 30, &c.

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They also described those two worthy Sisters, *Temperance*, and *Patience*, to stand upon the Hill inviting all Passengers that pass that Way to attempt the *arduous Ascent* for the sake of the Incomparable *Happiness* that resided there. And shall we Christians, who, by the Meridian Splendour of Revelation, have all the Steps and Stages of the Heavenly *Race* laid open before our Eyes, be less sensible of the Nature of our *Warfare*, that it is on every side beset with extraordinary Difficulties and Dangers; or, having an *Eternal Weight of Glory* so clearly set before us, and also a *thick Cloud of Witnesses*, who are already arrived at the top of the Hill, and stand continually animating and heartning us by their Words and Examples, to follow them to that *Perfection* of Blessedness; Shall we, I say, be thought to strain with a less noble Ardour and resolute Bravery for our *High Prize*, than the honest Pagan did for the *present reward* of Vertue?

We shou'd therefore often meditate on the Maxims of true Wisdom, not those only left us by the Sages of old, as *That a Good Man is happy in the worst*
Condi-

Condition of Life; That Vertue is her own Reward; but chiefly those recorded in Scripture, and in particular by that Royal and most renowned Preacher, King Solomon, who, having fully acquainted himself with all the Delights of the Sons of Men, and in his own Person tried the utmost of Wisdom and Folly, do's always speak with the greatest Advantage of Perswasion, and particularly in his admirable Book of Ecclesiastes, where, for our Instruction, he has delivered the following Precepts or wise Sentences, as the very last Result of his great and long Experience; All Earthly Things are vain and unsatisfactory; It is better to go to the house of Mourning, than to the house of Feasting; Sorrow (or Sadness) is better than Laughter; Rebukes are to be received before Commendations; It is best to look to the End of things; A patient suffering Mind, is better than a proud hasty Spirit; Wisdom is better than Riches, &c. Ecclef. 1, &c.

Which and the like Doctrines and Paradoxes shou'd be well imbibed and digested by him, who has any thoughts of joyning himself to the Society of Wise Men, who, understanding to distinguish Good from Evil, have always chosen

chosen the sad and *narrow* path to Felicity, rather than the *broad* and pleasant *Way* that leads to Folly and Misery.

Nor can we too much reflect on the Examples of the Saints, those *Adepts* in the Christian *Race*, who have trod the *rough path* before us, and though *Men of like passions with us*, and exposed to all our Temptations, yet *for the Joy set before them*, they bravely overcame all the Terrours and Blandishments of a treacherous World, and by their own Victories have shewn us what was practicable. We read " of † many " of both Sexes amongst the Primitive " Christians, that lived in a state of " *Celibacy*, and that chearfully submitted to the Austerities of an *Ascetick* " *Life*; some Women also in the 3^d " Age of the Church solemnly obliged themselves to preserve their *Virginity* all their Life-time: It was also " part of their Morality, ‡ That Christians ought to avoid not only *Criminal Pleasures*, and those that were " *dangerous*, such as the *Publick Shews*

† Du-Pin's *Eccles. Hist.* Vol. 1. pag. 202.

‡ Du-Pin, *Ibid.*

" and Theatres, but also all those un-
 " profitable Pastimes, which had no
 " other end, but the mere Entertain-
 " ment of the Senses. All this Strict-
 ness is neither required, nor expected
 from us; But yet these Patterns, Great
 and Good, as they are, shou'd, one
 wou'd think, be a check upon that *Li-*
cense which we are too apt to take in
 our Manners, and also to dispose us
 to some tolerable degree, at least, of So-
 briety and holy Living.

I do the rather insist on the Exam-
 ples of the Saints, and the Excellency
 of Vertue, in my Endeavours of brin-
 ing Men to strict and continent Living,
 and whilst I am recommending the Du-
 ty of *Fasting*, with its Uses, as con-
 ceiving that there is nothing more per-
 tinent to my Purpose: And I do here
 again beseech all Christians, as much and
 as often as they can, to reflect on the
Difference between a Chaste and Vitious
 Person, and to consider the *Native*
 Beauty of Vertue, and the *Essential* Tur-
 pitude of Vice, so long till they have
 deeply imbibed honourable and respect-
 ful Apprehensions of the One, and at-
 tained just Ideas of the Other; Because
 I cannot but look on this as one of the
 most

- and again

most effectual Methods to make us reject all the fairest Offers of Sin with Scorn and Contempt, and to chuse and prefer *Vertue* in her plainest Dress; The best Remedy in this case, being (as Bp. Taylor somewhere speaks) by *Applications to the Spirit*, such as are proper to bring the Mind *in love* with Purity: For tho' regular *Fasting* be a very special Means, in a Physical way, and by the Blessing of God promised to it, to prevent the Sins of Uncleaness, and the like; yet, till we come to be *in love* with Temperance, and to *admire* the excellence of Chastity, we shall hardly ever practice those Vertues in any good Degree.

“Αγνωση
παθημεν.”

But especially in this Argument, and for the reducing us to some degree of regular Living, let us never fail, as near as we can, to spend some part of every *Friday* (that Weekly *Passion-Day*) in meditating on the Incomparable Graces and *Unknown* Sufferings (yet attended with a Lamb-like Silence and Patience) of the *Blessed Jesus*. Is He not worthy our Meditation? Was there ever any thing in Humane Nature, of Great or Good, like Him? Who *though he was Rich* above all, being
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the *First born of every Creature* (that is, as the *First and only Begotton* of the Father, the undoubted *Heir of all Things*) yet, *for our sakes he became poor*, being content to be deprived of all Earthly Enjoyments, *that by his Poverty we might be made Rich*. Let us therefore, with the humblest Gratitude, be continually contemplating the *Beauties* of his Virgin-Life; how much he despised all the Vanities and Allurements of the World; how full of Retirement his few Days were: And when at any time we may be reproached or persecuted for our Imitation of him, let us remember what Treatment he, who was perfect God as well as perfect Man, met with from his Enemies; how whilst he hung on the Cross *they shook their heads, and shot their lips at him*; even whilst he was actually accomplishing the greatest Work that ever the World knew, the Salvation of Mankind by his Death: Let us, I say, but exercise any such Reflection on this most moving Subject of *Divine Love*, as may raise in us some apprehension and feeling, as it were, of the Acerbity of his Pains, and the Ignominy of his Sufferings, by remēbring with an holy Amazement. (And who can think on such *Love* without

without Amazement?) how his Sacred Hands were puckered by the Barbarous Nails, and the Tender Constitution of his Feet divided by the Cruel Iron, and how, amidst all this Agony, the incensed Wrath of God poured fresh and unspeakable Dolours into his wounded Soul (which was made an *Offering for Sin*) and such as forced from him that bitterest Complaint of his Fathers *Desertion*, And if any thing can make us resolute to *endure the Cross* and bear the *shame* of Religion (to suffer, I mean, those Evils and Inconveniencies which commonly attend, and so well become the Disciples of Christ) and prevail upon us to lead an holy Life here, sure to terminate in Glory, This greatest Example that Almighty God Himself could furnish out for our Use and Encouragement, even the Example of his Only Son, Living, and Dying in our Nature; This, or nothing can do it.

And what is there now so charming, or bewitching in Company, or any other humane Delight, that we cannot be perswaded to *separate* one Day in a Week for so great Ends? Are our merry, or most innocent
Meet-

Meetings, all Health, all Profit, all Happiness? There are none, sure, who will pretend they are so: No; but a charing Glass whets the Wit, and Conversation makes a Man fit for the World, and we cannot well have too much Improvement. Improvement is what I am pleading for, but let us chuse aright, and not please ourselves whilst we accept Trash for Treasure, things of no Value, or of an hurtful Nature, for Advantage. Young Men 'tis thought (for I write for the sake of Young Men; there is sure no need of teaching the Elder;) 'tis thought I say, that Young Men have little need of *Wine*: And this, by the way, we here in the University may well take to have been the Opinion of our *Founders*, by their appointing such a cheap and slender *Diet* for young Students. Nature it self is generally liberal enough in our Composition, since the Spirits of young Persons, as Experience tells us, do for the most part stand in need of cooling and allaying, more than of raising and inflaming. The Use of *Wine* therefore is not only not needful, but noxious and pernicious to that Age, as too frequent Examples testify, where Youth and

Wine

Prov. xx.
1.

Wine meet unhappily in Conjunction, and then (above all Times) too sadly verify the Wise Man's Observation, that *Wine is a mocker, strong Drink is raging, and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise*: Where the Words (*is not wise*) are a strong *Meiosis*, and the true Meaning is, that whoever is so betrayed is guilty of an Act of very great Folly and Indiscretion. For, does not excess in *Wine*, and so, in proportion, the too frequent Use of it, though in lesser quantity, especially as to younger Persons, does it not, I say, by degrees, generate in the Veins a preternatural Heat, which (to say nothing here of the fatal Consequences it too often occasions with respect to Health) is wont to fill them so full of themselves, and so mightily to encrease that Impatience of Government and Governors which is known to be too natural to the Youthful Age, that they many times can't bear a just and necessary Rebuke from those that are set over them, and much less what they esteem an Affront and Indignity from any to whose Authority they are not subject, without such Returns as prove very hurtful to the unhappy Offenders all their life after.

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The same unruly Temper, the too frequent and common product of an undue Liberty, (as one of its worst Effects) does, farther, strangely dispose Men (and the younger sort especially) to an open and downright Contempt of all things Serious and Sacred, and particularly, to scoff at and despise the Duty I have been recommending, that of holy *Fasting*, or *Abstinence*, together with all the suffering Doctrines of Religion, as being contrary to their Humours. By filling them also (as I before hinted) with an high conceit of their own Excellencies, (so that [*We are they that ought to speak*] becomes the Thought of their hearts) it causes them to look down with an air of Scorn and Contempt on others, and to be mighty uneasy at any thing like *preference* in a phansied Rival. This is what they seem of all Things least able to bear, and therefore will be sure to slip no Occasion of endeavouring, as much as they can, to darken and obscure so hated a Sight. The best-meant Design and most useful Performance of such an one shall be represented as wholly worthless and insignificant, if they can but espy the least Fault or Failing in any part of it. They are wont to

Psa! . xij. 4.

L search

search and sift Words and Phrases with an envious Curiosity. They catch at any shadow of Defect, and think they feel Substance. Every humane Infirmary shall be aggravated into a mountainous Fault; and if they happen to espy what they imagine a real Blemish, something indefensible in the Opinion of others also, then, as if it were their Design to shew that the Liberty I am speaking of, or rather Licentiousness, does utterly destroy all good Nature, as well as good Manners, they fall on without Mercy, sticking at no Means, however unworthy, to blacken and expose the Object of their Scorn, whom they are wont to pursue with a strange Delight, and, in this humor, to discover such Resentments, as 'tis hard to distinguish from malice it self: And thus, whilst every thing (as they say) has two Handles, these hasty Concluders seldom miss the wrong, being almost constantly on the uncharitable Side, whereby much matter of Blame is contracted, whilst they consider not enough what they *are treasuring up* to themselves *against That Day*.

Having therefore, as I suppose, said something that may recommend *Abstinence,*

nence, and a stricter Method of Living, more agreeable to the Laws and Rules of Religion; I cannot, methinks, but stop a while here, and express my hearty Wishes for a *strict* Institution of Youth, in all Places; since, as all the Aphorisms of the Ancients on this Head testify, as common Experience, and Scripture it self confirms, 'tis certain that the generality of Tempers, in order to the being contained within due Bounds, do stand in need of Check and Controul, and of being treated with Distance and the Marks of Authority, rather than to be indulged in Liberty and License: Which, however they may appear to advance the Man and the Schollar, 'tis plain that, what is much more considerable, the Moralist and the Christian, is thereby too much forgotten, whilst in this sort of Regimen, those excellent social Vertues of Humility, Modesty, and Meekness are but ill provided for, and (as it too often proves) the World is left to suffer the bad Effects of their Contraries.

We cannot therefore, having this Occasion, but bless Almighty God for sending us, in both our Universities, so many Worthy Governours, who

being both willing and able to hold a freight Hand on the reins of Discipline, and also zealous in promoting true Religion, do all that in them lies to obtain, That the Sciences, being ever joined with Good Manners and under the Conduct of strict Christian Principles, may, on all Occasions, appear like themselves, bright, chaste, and honourable, and not blended with such unseemly Mixtures of Learning and Rudeness (like good Corn overgrown with Weeds) as must needs trouble all sober Minds.

But to return:

As to that other Plea for Company and Conversation, That it prepares a Man for the World: I grant it may do so, and turn to real Advantage, if used cautiously and with Reserve; But when too much indulged, it has a very different Effect in only fitting Men for the *World*, as that Word in Scripture often signifies the vicious and most disorderly part of Mankind, in which sense

¹ John. iv. St. *John* saith, *We are not of the World*:
6. And it is a good and true Observation, That an honest and regular Man of but ordinary Abilities, yet sincerely desirous

rous to perform his Duty, shall generally do more good in his Station than another of the brightest Parts and most popular Conduct, but destitute of his Integrity, who being acceptable to Company, commonly keeps too much of it, and having acquired no great sense of Religion, too often sets such an Example as is not very fit for others to follow.

There is nothing, indeed, to be said for these licentious Practices, now and always too common: But the Business is, 'tis a thing grateful to our corrupt Nature to be *enjoying the Creature*, (as the Phrase is) and for young Men of plausible Parts and Conversation to appear Masters of their own Time, and for the Evidence of their Wit and Learning in Publick, to receive the *οφωδ* of the Company. These sort of Persons are also apt to fancy that such Meetings are a good Opportunity of contracting Friendships and Acquaintance, and of advancing themselves in the World: And thus they frame Reasons and Pretexts to be Irregular. But let such Excusers consider, and be in time aware of the Hook that lies covered under this gilded Bait, of the

Deceit that lurks within this fair Outside, and let them understand, that as the Minutes flow insensibly away, whilst they are pleasantly passing the Time, so do those precious Moments also, wherein they shou'd be storing their Minds with divine and religious Truths, and attending the Orders of the Church; the Neglect whereof is ill compensated by a little unhallowed Mirth, or the *Euges* of jolly Companions, whose Commendations, as well as *Laughter*, may fitly be compared to the *crackling of Thorns* upon an Hearth, which appear indeed to make a mighty Blaze, and promise much Refreshment, but presently extinguish, and leave those who wou'd have warmed themselves by them, as cold as they were before. Of such Irregular Merriment, its great Unprofitableness, and not only so, but the mischievous Effects that usually attend the Practice of it, the Wise Preacher has these remarkable Words, *I said of Laughter, it is mad; and of Mirth what doth it?* Where, if by the last Words, we understand, what Good does such excessive Mirth do any Man? It will be hard to give a ready Answer: But if by the same Question we suppose King *Solomon* to enquire what

Eccles. vij.
6.

Eccles. ij.
2.

what Hurt it does those who use it: It is obvious to reply, That it does them a great deal of Injury, whilst such vain Frolicking has a strange Power to steal away the Heart, and fasten the Affections on this World, and hinder those who are taken with it from thinking, as becomes them, of G O D, the Author of their Being, or of any thing else that is worthy of serious *Christians*. For which unspeakable Loss what reward have they but the Applauses of a few loose Companions?—But, Blessed God! what signifies Wit, and all the Reputation of it, without *Grace*? what avails Parts, and all the Endowments of Art and Nature, without *Piety*? (for I will dare to use that despised Word;) unless it be to make Men more learnedly Miserable, if (as too often happens) God shou'd be provoked to *deal with them after their Sins*, and the Follies and Errours of their Lives.

But Brethren, Beloved, or whoever shall read these things, We hope and are perswaded better Things of you, καὶ τὰ ἐχόμενα σωτηρίας, and things adjoyning to Salvation, though we thus speak. The Danger is, least young Persons, delighting too much in Company and a looser

Conduct, shou'd not be easily drawn off from so pleasing an Error for the sake of mortifying Meditations, and the discipline of *Abstinence* and Christian Devotion.

And thus I have endeavoured to represent and urge some of that Strictness of Life, which the Christian Religion requires. If what I have discoursed looks too morose and Cynical for some Mens Palates, I am sorry for it; I can't help it; I take Things as I find them, and doubt not but to all who are not unhappily prejudiced by vicious Habits, the Gospel of Christ will still appear worth embracing with all its seeming Disadvantages.

To quicken us yet more to the practice of holy *Fasting* and *Retirement*, so pleasing to God, most useful to our selves, and † terrible to Devils, who

† Νηστεία φοβερά τῇ ᾧ. Δαυμόνων φύσις. τοῖς ἔχθροις τῆς ζωῆς, οἷς ἐδὲν ἔτω φίλον, ὡς τρυφή ἔ μίση. S. Chrysost. de Jejun.

Οὐτε γὰρ ἐπήρεια Δαυμόνων κατεπλημῶ νηστεύοντ. S. Bas. Ser. 2. de Jejun.

Luxuriosum oppugnat inimicus (Satan) ubi autem jejunum viderit, fugit, metuit, pertimescit, terretur pallore ejus, debilitatur inedia, infirmitate prosternitur. S. Ambr. Ser. 25.

are

are delighted with nothing more than *Epicurean* Diet and Drunkenness, let us frequently reflect, 1st. On the Examples of *Fasting* which we read of in the Old-Testament, even under the *Law*, and before the Son of God had by *fasting* 40 *Days and 40 Nights* consecrated this Duty of *Abstinence*, and before ever he had shed his most precious Blood upon the Cross, by a most amazing and never be to forgotten Sacrifice: Even under the *Law*, I say, we find the *Jews*, upon Occasion, *fasting till the Evening*, 2 Sam. i. 12. 1 Sam. vij. 6. & Judg. xx. 26. We find a *Fast* recorded of *one whole Day and the Night* following; so *David* fasted when his Child was in Danger of Death, 2 Sam. xij. 16. We have there a *Fast* also of *three Days together*, so *Esther* and her People, *Esth.* iv. 16, 17. And the *Jews*. 2 Macc. xij. 10. 12. verses. The Men of *Jabesh Gilead* fasted 7 *Days* for *Saul* and *Jonathan* his Son, and the Defeat of the Army of *Israel*; *Joseph* made a Mourning for his *Father* 7 *Days*, Gen. 50. 10. And so did *Job's*

Castra enim nobis sunt nostra Jejunia, quæ nos à Diabolica oppugnatione defendunt. S. *Ambr.* ibid.

Signum panis petit à Salvatore Diabolus, ut jejunii tremendum sibi refugiat signum. *Chrysosol.*

Friends

Dan. x. 3.

-cubations

Friends sit down with him 7 Days and 7 Nights fasting not only from Meat, but even from the pleasure of Words, or Speech; for none spake a Word unto him, because they saw that his Grief was great, Job. ij. Ult. And lastly, holy Daniel, that *Vir Desideriorum*, or Man greatly Beloved, by a yet greater firmness of Mind, fasted 3 whole Weeks, during which Time, he eat no pleasant Bread, nor did Wine come into his Mouth, nor did he anoint himself at all. These are several Instances of Old-Testament Fasting, which we Christians, who live under a Dispensation to which religious Mourning and Abstinence is more agreeable than it was to the Jews, shou'd often and seriously remember and think upon when we find our selves dull and backward to this Duty: 2dly, Let us also devoutly meditate on the Discipline or Religious Austerities of the Ancient Christians, how, in the Days especially before Easter, they practiced their † *lyings on the Ground* (or *Humiliations*) their Purities, afflictive Sufferings, Dry-Diets, Prayers, Watchings, Fastings, and the like, generally

† Ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις τῆς Πάσχα παρ' ἡμῶν χαρδύλια, ἀγρίαι, κακοπάγια, ξηροφαγία, εὐχαι, ἀγρυπνίαι τε & νηστείαι.
Epiphan. Heref. 75.

Suffer.

throughout the Season of *Lent*, abstaining from *Flesh* and *Wine*, for humbling the *Soul* and chastning the *Body*. *St. Chrysostom* saies of the *Christian People* of his Age, † *That when the Fast of Lent was come, though any one would entreat a Man ten thousand Times, though he should never so much urge and force him to partake in a Feast of Wine, or any other Delicacy forbidden on the Fast-Days, he would rather suffer all than tast of such prohibited Nourishment. And, although, says he, we like well enough of such Refreshments, yet for the accustoming of our Conscience, we bear all generously and persist in Mourning.* So practised the *Christians*, or *Catholicks*, of some of the first Ages of the *Church*. And here I willingly observe that in treating on this Argument, (the *Abstinence* of the *Ancient Church*) the most worthy **Bishop Gunning* takes Notice, with Dislike, that so few either of the *Roman* or opposite *Perfwasion*, do in *Practice*, or *Rule*, admit the ‡*Ab-*

Lent-Fast,
pag. 193.

† Καὶ μυρία πς παρακλη, καὶ μυρία πς ἀγκη καὶ βιάζε-
ται, ὥστε μεταχεῖν οἰνοποσίας, ὁμως, ἀλλὰ τὴν ἀπὸ τῆ συνειδή-
σεως συνήθειαν, φέρουσιν πάντα γενναίως παλαιπορέμενοι. *S. Chrysost.* Hom. 6. ad Pop. *Antioch.*

‡ *S. Hierom* commenting on those words of *Daniel*, I ate no pleasant Bread, or Bread of Desires, says, Hoc docemur exemplo tempore Jejunii à cibis delicatioribus
stinence

stinence from Wine as any part of a Fast. And if such Advice shou'd seem an *hard saying* to any, let them consider how agreeable Humiliations and Sufferings are to *Christians* who follow a Crucified Saviour; and let them ask themselves these Questions, † *Whether that ought to appear burthensom to them, which the Universal Church doth (or shou'd) bear with them? And how they can expect to partake of the Sweet, who will not taste of the Sour?* Let us farther recall to mind, and be assured, that as we lost Paradise by *Eating*, so we must regain it (only) by *Fasting and Abstinence*; which is therefore ‡ *fitly exacted of fallen Mankind.* And if, as St. Chrysostom speaks, *whilst there was no war of Lusts raised within us, (that is, in Paradise) this Armour*

abstinere, *h. e.* nec *Carnem* comedere, nec *Vinum* bibere; quod ego puto nunc dici *panem desiderabilem*. S. Hier. in loc.

† Nunquid non valde indignum est, ut nobis onerosum sit, quod Ecclesia portat Univerſa nobiscum?

An reſpuere triſtia volumus, & communicare jucundis? S. Bern. Ser. 1. & 3. de Jejun.

By the Fast of Lent, ſays S. Auſtin, the Sorrow of this Life is expreſſed, (*Vitæ hujus ſignificatur mæror;*) and ſince we all partake of it, why ſhould we not all agree to repreſent it? S. Aug. Sermon. of Lent.

‡ Ἡ ἐν πολλῇ (νηθείᾳ) ἢ ἐπιτάχῃ μὲν εἰκότως. Greg. Nazianz. Orat. 41.

of

of Fasting was of use, much more after so great a Fight, from Lusts within, and Devils without, the same auxiliary Force is necessary. Again to encourage our selves to this Duty, let us not be unmindful that for a *Quadragesima* of Fasting there follows a *Quinquagesima* of Feasting, or Joy for the Bridegrooms Return. (Excepting only the **Weekly Friday-Fast* still continued in our Church.) Let us also frequently meditate on the excellent Nature of this peaceful Duty, the Quiet, Decency, and Serenity with which it is attended, such as must recommend it to every Mind that is not wholly corrupted by Worldly Customs; *Fasting and Abstinence* being (as † *S. Basil* speaks) *the ornament of Cities, the tranquillity of Publick Places, the peace of Families; To be convinced of which, he tells his Auditors, they needed only compare the Night of the present Day in which he preached to them (a Day of Publick*

* The omission of the Wednesday-Fast in the Church of England, seems to be in some measure compensated, by continuing the Friday-Fast through the whole space from Easter to Whitsontide, which the Primitive Christians passed without Fasting, according to that of Tertullian, *Cur quinquaginta exinde diebus in omni Exultatione decurrimus? Lib. de Jejun. cap. 14.*

† *Hom. 1. de Jejun. Vid. Du Pin Eccles. Hist. Vol. 2. pag. 150.*

Fasting) with the Night of the following Day (wherein no such Restraint was imposed :) And if any, or all these Motives cannot prevail upon us to observe our *set Times of Abstinence and Retirement*, let us then force our selves to the Religious Duty by considering, what is a great Truth, That one hour in Hell is more intolerable than an hundred Years in the house of Repentance; and that, as God commanding

Ezek. iv. 9. his Prophet *Ezekiel* to bear on his *Right Side* the Iniquity of the House of *Judah* 40 Days, told him, *He had appointed him each Day (only) for a Year*, wherein he wou'd lay Bonds upon him, and he shou'd endure no more than a *Day* of Punishment for a *Year* of their Sin; so in the business of *Fasting* and holy *Mortification*, it may possibly be to us, for our own Sins, each Day for a Million of Years, or rather, the few Days of our Humbling may serve to atone for an Eternity of Torments, due to our Sins (to which a Million of Years bear no Proportion) and we may well be patient under such *Bonds*.

We cannot have too much incitement to this Christian Duty, to which we are so averse, and for avoiding and defer-

deferring whereof we are wont to frame and invent so many Pretences; and therefore to what I have already discoursed and urged, I shall here add an † Elogium of *Holy Fasting*.

Fasting (saies ‡ St. Basil) is the beginning of Repentance, the restraint of Anger, the destroyer of Concupiscence; Another of the Antients calls it *The Mother* or Parent of all Good and of all Chearfulness; Another stiles it *The proportion of Reason*, the purity of the Heart, the mother of Health, the instructor of Youth, the ornament of the Elder; an excellent Preservative of the Soul, the Body's Guardian, the weapon of Gallant Men, the exercise of (Spiritual) Wrestlers, the decency of Cities, the quiet of Courts, the peace of Private Families: Fasting makes the Young Man sober-minded, the Old Man grave and reverend; 'tis the most becoming Dress of Women, a bridle to those that are in their full Strength, the * custody of Marriage, the nurse of the Virgin-life: Fasting is our assimilation unto Angels, the fountain of

† Vid. Bp Gunning of Lent-Fast, p. 216. &c.

‡ Ἀρχὴ μετανοίας καὶ σωτηρίας. Serm. 2 de Jejun.

* Συζυγίας φυλακὴ καὶ σωτηρία παρθενίας τοῦ σώματος, &c. S. Basil. 1. Serm. de Jejun.

*Temperance, the beginning of Continence, the Understanding's Clearness, the correction of the Will, the cutting off of Lasciviousness, the † calm and serenity of the Soul: Fasting, says St. Ambrose, is the * repast of the Soul, the nourishment of the Mind, the life of Angels, the death of Sin: It transforms on a sudden all the City and all the People into a well-ordered Appearance; It quiets the Noise, pacifies the Brawling, and stills the Trouble and Tumult of Publick Places. In the time of Fasts, (says the forenamed Person) what lascivious Company can have admittance? Filthy Songs and outrageous Dances suddenly depart, being chased away by Fasting, as by an austere Judge. Again, Fasting prepared Moses to receive the Tables of the Law, which were broken for the Fulness of the People, who sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play: By Fasting and Prayer (as the forementioned Father thinks) was Samuel the Prophet begotten, more than by the Ordinary Means of Procreation, which were ineffectual with-*

† Ταῦν ἡμετέρων ψυχῶν θαλάσση. S. Chrysoſt.

* Jejunium refectio Animæ, cibus Mentis, vita Angelorum, culpæ Mors. Lib. de Jejun. & Eliâ c. 3.

out them: And of Sampson, that Renowned Judge of Israel, he says, *With Fasting he was conceived in his Mother's Womb, Fasting brought him forth, and Fasting nourished him*; from whence he concludes, That † *Fasting begets Prophets*. But neither had wise Daniel seen the Visions of God, had not Fasting rendred his Soul bright and pure; That ‡ *Man of Desires, who fasting three whole Weeks, taught even the Lions to fast*. By Fasting also, says St. Cyril, the three Children became dreadful and inexpugnable; because when they might have partaken of King Nebuchadnezzar's famous Feasts, they preferred slender Diet, leaving the full Cups and Tables to the Babylonians: For which they were rewarded with Divine Visions, appearing stronger than the Fire it self. In the New Testament, S. John the Baptist, a most eminent Exemplar of holy Fasting, whose Meat was Locusts and wild Honey, is by our Lord himself described as a burning and shining Light: And Anna the Prophetess the Wife of one Husband, to whom she

† Νηστία γυνῆ Περσίδας. S. Bas. Serm. de Jejun.

‡ Daniel. Vir denderiorum, non comedens panem denderiorum.

*came a pure Virgin, being remarkable in her Widowhood for her frequent Fastings, had the Honour to embrace our Infant-Lord in her Arms, and to speak many Things prophetically concerning Him; thereby † shewing (says Tertullian) that CHRIST is by none sooner understood than by the chaste Soul and Widows of often-Fastings. Such is the Character, and such the high Rewards of religious Fasting, that ‡ Enemy of all Wickedness, and truest Friend to Vertue. Whence some have called it * A Gift of God, the Grace (or Favour) of Fastings, an Institution flowing from the Fountain of Divine Instruction, conceived by the Holy Ghost's influencing the Princes of the Church, and the like Encomiastick Praises have been largely given of it by Others. Let us therefore, as a great*

† Ostendens à nullis magis intelligi Christum, quam semel nuptis, & sæpe Jejunis. *Lib. de Jejun. cap. 8.*

‡ Ἡ ὁ σώφρων ἡμῶν αἰσίδα ὑπέστα, ἡ πάλους ἀμωπίας ἱχ. *Ἰσα. S. Cyr. Hom. 1. de Fest. Pasch.*

* Manifestissimè patet inter cætera Dei munera, *jejuniorum* quoque Gratiam Ecclesiæ fuisse donatam, atque influente in Ecclesiæ Principes Spiritu Sancto, hanc primum ab eis Observantiam fuisse conceptam, dubium non est. *Leo, Serm. de Jejun.*

In cœlestibus Ecclesiæ Disciplinis multum Utilitatis afferant divinitus instituta *Jejunia*. *Id. Ser. 12. de Quadrages.*
Providente gratiâ Dei addita sunt sancta *Jejunia*. *Ibid.*

Man advises (gladly) *receive this truly chaste and holy Ordinance, the Nurse of all good Order, the Mother of Sanctity, and the Harbinger of a Good Will from above.* Let us by the help of so Excellent an Instrument cure all the Wounds of our Vices, and get all Christian Graces planted in our Souls; and, by our Acquaintance with it, let us always, upon all Occasions, as far as is possible, † prepare our selves to be worthy Receivers of CHRIST'S Body and Blood; for which solemn *Fasting* is one of the best Preparatives: And no greater Thing can, nothing Greater need be said of it.

Before I conclude, I cannot, in this Age of Divisions, but request that in our *Fasting-Retirements* we wou'd be sure always to let the Study and Contemplation of *Christian Charity* make one main part of our Business: *Christian Love and Charity*, I say, which far exceeds *all Mysteries* and *all*

† Ut dignius celebremus Sacramenta Redemptionis nostræ, saluberrimè nos 40 dierum *jejunio* præparemus. Leo, Serm. 5. de *Quadrag.*

And again, Serm. 10. Cognoscimus ad celebrandum *Pascha* diem, meritò nos 40 dierum *jejunio* præparari, ut dignè possimus divinis interesse Mysteriis.

Knowledge, and, in its due *Extent*, in conjunction with a *Right Faith*, comprehends the *Sum* of the Gospel, and by the Great Apostle of the Gentiles, who perpetually burnt bright with this Fire (and so from a feeling Experience best knew how to set it forth) is thus described; *Charity suffereth long, and*
 † *Xenstus* is † *kind, or courteous*, i. e. (says Dr. *Hammond*) 'This Vertue teacheth Forbearance, makes a Man perfectly patient, and not revengeful of Injuries, but, on the contrary, infuses a Benignity into his Nature, which makes him consider the Good of others as much as he do's his own: *Charity envieth not*, but is very well pleased at other Men's Happiness: *Charity*
 † *Où πρὸς* † *vaunteth not it self, is not puffed up*,
 † *πεύσεται,* 'is not guilty, that is, of any foolish E-
 q. d. non lation of Mind, of Ambition or Osten-
 perperam tation, nor of any such Pride or Insolence, as makes a Man to overvalue himself, and despise others: *Doth not*
 facit se le- behave it self unseemly, 'in Word, or
 viter effe- 'Gesture, towards others, but is very
 tendo. careful to observe due *Decorum* at all times, and in all Places: *Seeketh not*
her own 'Benefit or Welfare only, but
 'enclines a Man to take care of the Pro-
 'fit and Good of others, and not only
 'his

'his own Advantage: *Is not easily provoked*, or (as the † Greek more literal-† οὐ πα-
 ly imports) *is not highly provoked or exasperated*, i. e. 'permits not the Man
 'it possesses to fall into immoderate vio-
 'lent Distempers of Anger upon what-
 'ever Provocation: *Thinketh* († or im-† οὐ λογί-
 puteth) *no evil*, i. e. 'doth not medi-ζέται κακόν.
 'tate Mischief towards any, but when
 'the Charitable Man himself has recei-
 'ved an Injury or Wrong, this Vertue
 'disposes him to be very slow and back-
 'ward in *imputing*, or charging it on the
 'Offender: *Rejoyceth not in Iniquity*, 'in
 'the sins or Errours of others; *but re-*
joyceth in (or *congratulates with) the * Συγχαίει
Truth, i. e. 'is heartily well pleased when τῇ ἀληθείᾳ.
 'any live, and act as faithful Christians
 'ought to do: *Beareth* (or ^d*covereth*) d Στέγει.
all things; i. e. 'It inclines a Man to
 'hide and conceal all the Evil he knows
 'of another, so far as is consistent with
 'his own Obligations: *Believeth all*
things,] 'It disposeth a Man to believe
 'without prejudice all the Good that
 'he has any ground in Charity to be-
 'lieve of his Neighbour: *Hopeth all*
things,] 'It makes him also to be ex-
 'tremely loth to despair of the Repen-
 'tance of his Brother, till all possible
 'Means have been used to reclaim him:

Endureth all things,] and lastly, 'it fortifies a Man to endure much Pain, 'Trouble, and Loss, to procure a greater 'Good to Others, than the Evil he suffers therein is to himself: This is that Divine God-like Quality, or right Christian Grace, which dies not with this World, but, like the Spirit of Man, shall have a surviving Existence and Immortality in Heaven; when those inferiour Gifts of *Prophecy, Tongues,* and all Humane *Knowledge,* shall be swallowed up in that Abyss of Perfection.

And this most excellent Vertue, *The Love of God and our Brethren,* without which though we understood the Languages of all Nations, and were able to converse with Angels, we were (yet) no better than a *resounding Brass,* or a *tinkling Cymbal* (which disturb rather than please the Neighbourhood, when Children make a rattling Noise upon them;) This most Excellent Grace, I say, of *Christian Charity,* if on our *Fasting-Days,* we labour to transcribe into our selves, by contemplating the Nature of God and his Attributes, the Displays of his Wisdom and his Goodness to Man, and by a practical Beneficence towards others, *in dealing*
our

our Bread to the hungry, and bringing the Poor that are cast out to our House; when we see the Naked that we cover him, and not hiding our selves from our own Flesh; by endeavouring also to loose the bands of Wickedness, and undo the heavy Burthens, and let the Oppressed go free, and breaking every Yoke: Hear then the Promise of God by his Prophet, Then shall thy Light break forth as the Morning, and thine Health shall spring forth speedily; and thy Righteousness shall go before thee, the Glory of the Lord shall be thy rereward: Then thou shalt call, and the Lord shall answer, thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am: If thou take away (also) from the midst of thee the Yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking Vanity; then shall the Lord guide the continually, and satisfy thy Soul in drought, and make fat thy bones, and thou shalt be like a watered Garden, and like a Spring of Water, whose Waters fail not: And they that shall be of thee, shall build the old waste places; thou shalt raise up the foundations of many Generations, and thou shalt be called The Repairer of the breach, the Restorer of paths to dwell in: The Sum of which Old Testament

Promise, is, What Christ our Saviour has taught us in the Gospel, That the Great and Blessed God the Father, to whom be Honour and Glory perpetual, as He has been pleased to oblige himself by his Word, will indeed render to all *true Fasters an open Reward.*

St. James
iv. 8.

I shall therefore fitly close all with that Exhortation of the Apostle, *Draw nigh to God, cleanse your hands ye Sinners, and purify your hearts ye Double-minded: Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep; Let your Laughter be turned to Mourning, and your Joy to Heaviness; Humble your selves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.*

To

TO help our Memories, which are too apt to be frail and treacherous in point of timely recollecting the holy *Church-Fasts* in order to a due Observance of them, I have here added a TABLE of the several *Fasts*, according to the Months of the Year, or the Time of their annual Return.

DAYS of Fasting, or Abstinence in the Church of England.

January.

30. The Martyrdom of K. *Charles. I.*

February.

1. The Eve of the *Purification* of the Virgin *Mary.*

15. About this Time be always enquiring

A TABLE of

quiring for *Lent* or the *Spring-Fast*, containing in all 40 *Days*, and sometimes beginning thus soon, or sooner. The *Fast* also of the 1st *Ember-Week* being the *Wednesday*, *Friday*, and *Saturday* after the 1st *Sunday* in *Lent*, is to be remembered so soon as *Lent* is begun.

23. The Eve of St. *Matthias*, the Apostle.

March.

24. The Eve of the *Annunciation* of the Blessed Virgin *Mary*.

About this Time, the most Solemn Eve, or Vigil of *Easter-Day*, or our Lord's Resurrection is to be Remembered: The whole Day, called Τὸ Μέγα Σάββατον, or the *Great Saturday*.

April.

This Month without any Fast in it, unless the *Lent-Fast* reaches to any part, or most of it, as it frequently falls out.

May.

At the beginning of this Month, be enquiring

enquiring before-hand, when the *Three Rogation-Days* fall, being the *Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday* before *Ascension-Day*.

And for *Whit-Sunday*, the *Eve* whereof is to be observed as *Fast*.

The *Fast* also of the *2d Ember-Week*, being the *Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday* in *Whitson-Week*, is now to be thought upon.

June.

23. The *Eve* of *S. John the Baptist*.

28. The *Eve* of *S. Peter, the Apostle*.

July.

24. The *Eve* of *S. James, the Apostle*.

August.

23. The *Eve* of *S. Bartholomew, the Apostle*.

September.

14. The *Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday*, after this *Day*, are the *Fast-Days* of the *3d Ember-Week*.

20. The

A TABLE of &c.

20. The Eve of *S. Matthew*, Apostle and Evangelist.

October.

27. The Eve of *S. Simon and S. Jude*, Apostles.

31. The Eve of *All Saints*.

November.

29. The Eve of *S. Andrew*, the Apostle.

December.

13. The *Wednesday*, *Friday* and *Saturday* after this Day, are the Fasting-Days of the 4th, and last *Ember-Week*.

20. The Eve of *S. Thomas*, the Apostle.

24. The Eve of *Christmas-Day*, or the Nativity of our LORD.

Every *Friday* in the Year, except *Christmas-Day* falls on a *Friday*.

Note.

Note. I take the foregoing **TABLE** to be a true and ready **Direction** for our knowing and remembring the several *Fasting-Days* of our Church, with this **Caution** only, That if any of the above-named *Feasts* happen at any time, to fall on a *Monday*, then the *Vigil* or *Fast-Day* is not to be kept on the *Even* immediately preceding, but upon the *Saturday* before.

Some

~~Some Additions: designed to explain and confirm the foregoing Discourse.~~

AS to the Historical Evidence for an *Ante-paschal Fast*, begun p. 79. of the 2^d Discourse, where and in the following Pages it is shewn, that the Apostles Themselves, and the *Christians* of those First Ages, from their Example and Counsel did observe such a *Fast*: If any, with **Mons. Daillé*, shall object against the scantness of the Testimony or the silence of the Writers of those Ages in this Matter, Let it be considered whether there hath not been as much cited (and more might have been added) from the Writers of those First Centuries, concerning the *Fast* we are defending, as cou'd be expected from the scarcity of Authors, and the rarity of the Occasion for such a Mention; The Church having, in those Earliest Ages,

* De jejun. & Quadrages. l. 2. cap. 19.

been generally employ'd, either in making Apologies for Christianity against Pagan Adversaries, or Defending it against Hereticks, or else, lastly, in preparing to suffer Persecution, in all Shapes and Forms; so that she had the less time to spare for settling the *Discipline* of Religion. Had, however, the several Synodical Answers about the Time of keeping *Easter*, with *Victor's* and *Irenæus's* circular Letters been preserved, as also *Melito's* Treatises, and *Clemens Alexandrinus's* Book of the *Paschal-Season*, we shou'd, doubtless, have had more Light into this subject than we have: But these Writings being lost, either by the common fate of Books, or else because neglected when the Dispute was given up, and the practice of *Victor* universally prevailed, we want all the Confirmation they might have afforded us. And, 'as to *Eusebius's* not quoting any thing from them: He (as One observes) might not think himself concerned to make Extracts or collect Authorities from those Authors, for a Practice in which those of the Time when they were written all agreed, and which none of his own ever questioned. It being more to his purpose to give an Account from them of the Controverted Points,

and

and for the rest to leave us to this general and common Conclusion, That each way of ending the *Paschal-Fast* (and consequently the *Fast* itself) was derived from *Apostolical Tradition*.* 'Tis true indeed, there is no particular *Canon* to be found, in the 3 First Centuries, that enjoins a *Lent* of 40 Days thus soon, (which for these Times, was rather interlocutorily agreed upon, than formally determined,) but neither is the Ordinance about *Easter* found in the *Canons*, though it was such a disputed Point†. Let me add, Whatever want of Evidence we may imagine for the Apostolical Right of a *Lent-Fast* in the First Ages, this was abundantly made up in those which followed. For, after that the Writings of Christian Bishops came to be more frequent, and to be better preserved, (*viz.* Since the Days of *Constantine*;) Who is there almost (saith ‡ Bishop *Gunning*) that doth not bear witness to the Apostolical Recommendation of a 40 Days *Fast*? Briefly (says he) there is not one of the 24 indubitable *Paschal E-*

* *Vid. Discourse concerning Lent. pag. 32. 33.*

† *Ibid. pag. 107.*

‡ *Paschal-Fast. Appen. pag. 486.*

‘pistles, or Homiles of *Theophilus*, and
 ‘*St. Cyril of Alexandria* (and *St. Austin*
 and *St. Hierom* he had just before ci-
 ted) ‘which doth not witness the *Ab-*
 ‘*stinence* of 40 *Days* before *Easter* to
 ‘have descended from the Apostles, or
 ‘from instruction Evangelical from the
 ‘*LORD*; which also was not taught the
 ‘*World* but by the Apostles. We may
 therefore safely infer with * a Learn-
 ed Person, ‘That though the Observance
 ‘of a *Lent-Fast* or *Forty Season* might
 ‘grow so Universal (as it was) from
 ‘the Recommendation of the Nicene
 ‘Fathers, yet there is great Reason
 ‘to believe that there was very ancient-
 ‘ly some regard had to the Number
 ‘*Forty*; which in process of time in-
 ‘creased very much, so as to have been
 ‘the solemn Number of *Lent* in many
 ‘Churches by the Third Century.

To what is alledg’d pag. 89. from
St. Irenæus in proof of the very primi-
 tive Observance of a *Lent*, or *Spring-*
Fast, these Words of the same Letter
 to *Victor*, Bishop of *Rome*, concerning
 the Diversity in observing that *Fast*
 (designed to render *Victor* better sa-

* *Discourse concerning Lent.* pag. 123.

tified with the Asiatics for disagreeing with him about the Time of keeping *Easter*, by shewing that there were great Differences also even about the the Manner of observing the preceding *Fasts*) may be worth adding, [Οἱ μὲν γὰρ οἴονται μίαν ἡμέραν δεῖν αὐτοῖς νηστεύειν. Οἱ δὲ δύο. Οἱ δὲ καὶ πλείονας. Οἱ δὲ πεσσεράκοντα ὥρας ἡμερινὰς τε καὶ νυκτερινὰς συμμετρῶσι τὴν ἡμέραν αὐτῶν.] Where if, as hath seemed very probable to some Learned Men, there ought to have been a Point made at πεσσεράκοντα by those who began the Punctuation, (since, as † Bishop Gunning notes, in the old Greek MSS. of the Age of Irenæus, 'tis certain there were no Accents or Points usually and distinctly added) then will this Passage contain a very express Testimony for the High Antiquity of a *Quadragesimal*, or *Forty-Days Fast*, even in the life-time of S. Irenæus, who wrote this Letter to Victor within 98 Years after the Death of St. John.

But supposing (as, it seems, there is also good Countenance from MSS.) that there is to be no Stop after πεσσεράκοντα, but that Word to be joyn'd with ὥρας, and so set, with the Context, to express 40 hours, or a Day of 40 hours and

† *Paschal-Fast.* pag. 475.

and not 40 *Days*, according to this rendering of the last part of the forecited Words, (which others follow) —

And some by 40 hours of Day-time and of Night measure out their Day. (viz. their *Fasting Day*;) though it seems hard to give any good sense of the Words in that Construction, since a Day of 40 *hours* is a space of time before unheard-of, yet even then the Words preceding Οἱ δὲ παρασχόντα in *Irenæus's* Letter, may, perhaps, well enough be allowed, under the * latitude of πλείονας, or *more*, to imply a *Fast of 40 Days*.

Lastly, allowing that to be the true Meaning of *Irenæus*, which *B. Rhennanus* accidentally met with in a very ancient † *Synopsis*, and which ‡ *Bishop Gunning* thinks is, for the Antiquity of it, much to be regarded in order to the right interpreting this Fragment of *Irenæus*, (the * Words in English

* Vid. *Discourse concerning Lent*. pag. 40.

† Σύνοψις τῆς εὐαγγελικῆς ἱστορίας.

‡ *Paschal-Fast*. Append. pag. 466.

* Οἱ μὲν γὰρ μίαν μόναν ἡμέραν ἐνήστειον, οἱ δὲ δύο, οἱ δὲ πλείονας, οἱ δὲ μ' ἄρας μόνας ἡμέρας ἐν ἰουκρινάις, ἔχον ἀπὸ τῆς ἡμέρας ἡγεμονίας.

So the Words of *Irenæus's* Epistle to Victor, cited by *Eusebius* in the foregoing Form, are expressed in this very an-

run thus, viz.) *Some fast one Day only, and some two, and some more, and some fast 40 hours only of Day-time and of Night, fasting an hour for a Day;* that is, as the * Bishop explains the last part of the Words, 'Some there were even in the Primitive Church who, finding themselves unable to reach the Fast of 40 Days, and yet being willing to observe some Resemblance thereto, as well as to Christ's being 40 hours giving up to Death, resolv'd to fast 40 hours together, reckoning to themselves *an hour for a Day*, and, as is most probable, measuring their Time from 8 a Clock of the Night preceding *Good-Friday* (when our Blessed LORD's bloody Sweat and Agony began) and continuing it till about noon on *Saturday*, which is the

cient Synopsis: which supposing it, in this particular, to be only a metaphrase, or Gloss on Irenæus's Words (tho' Bishop Gunning thinks it not improbable but that the Words in this Synopsis may be the very true Reading of Irenæus) yet is the Passage Considerable for the great Antiquity of this Writing, the Author whereof as living nearer to, must also be more knowing of the Primitive Churches Practice; And by such Writers are the obscurer sayings of later Authors oftentimes best interpreted. Paschal or Lent-Fast. pag. 465, 466.

* Ibid. App. pag. 462, 463.

just

'just Number of 40 *hours*, (and in which
 Interpretation that most worthy Pre-
 late declares himself, to have been con-
 firmed by finding in Ancient Authors,
 'that it was a frequent Custom for *Chri-*
 '*stians*, in those Days, to practice a † *Ag-*
 '*νυκτερεύουσις*, or *Whole-Nights Watch*, on
 'the Night preceding *Good-Friday*, in
 'Memory of, and some accommodation
 'to our LORD's most indign Suffering
 'that whole Night, in which he rested
 'not at all, but passed from his Agony
 'to his Apprehension, and from thence
 'being carried, like a Malefactor, from
 'one House of Justice to another; in Joh. xvij.
 'which Prosecution he suffered the 13. & 24.
 'greatest Indignities from his own Peo-
 'ple the *Jews*, and their malicious Ru-
 'lers, even unto the dawning of that
 'Light which He Himself had created;
 'at the first Appearing whereof He was
 'led by the Chief Priests and Scribes in-
 'to their Council to a fresh Examina- Luk. xxij.
 'tion, and thence early in the Morning 66.
 'to *Pilates Judgment-Hall*, &c. having Joh. xvij.
 'before about the Time of the *Cock-* 28.
 '*crowing*, been denied by his own Dis-
 'ciple, *Peter*;) Allowing this, I say, to
 have been the true meaning of *Irenæus's*

† Otherwise called by the Greeks, *παννυχίδας* ἢ *πανύκτωρ*.
 Words

Words, *viz.* That some *Christians* in those very early Times, in consideration of our *L O R D's* most extraordinary Sufferings on the Night preceding *Good-Friday*, as well as on his most Solemn *Passion-Day*, as also (perhaps) grounding their Practice on the Apostles Condescension to the *Jews* in some Countreys, about the Time of keeping *Easter*, and towards some infirm or weaker Persons in allowing them to dispence with the *Fast* of *Lent*, in whole, or in part, (according to the degree of their Infirmary;) did resolve to comprize their *Lent-Fast* into an *Abstinence* of 40 hours, without intermission, beginning their *Fast* at about 8 of the Clock on *Thursday* in the *Holy-Week*, and continuing the same to about Noon the *Saturday* following; in which Method they might (farther) be so followed by others, who, perhaps, had no bodily Infirmary to plead, till this became at length a noted different Way of observing the *Paschal-Fast*; Yet will † *Dallæus's* inference from hence be unjust, and a mere singularity in him, *viz.* That the *Quadragesi-*

† Vid. *Dall. de Quadr.* l. 3. c. 7. & *Discourse of Lent.* pag. 103, 104.

mal-Fast or *Forty-Season*, in the *Christian Church*, took its Original from this *Fast of 40 hours*; Whereas, this very Ancient Author, whose Words we are now considering, †found *Irenæ-* †Vid. Pr
chal-Fa
pag. 456.
us presupposing in the Church *the simple and plain Manner of a Forty Days-Fast* (before *Easter*) before such Change had been made into *40 hours*; Which Change (as also several other Variations in the *Antepaschal-Fast*) *Irenæus's* own Words in his Epistle to *Victor*, are so far far from approving, that they do evidently charge them to have happened by some Mens *unaccurate Walking*, or *Discession* from the Churches common Custom of *Fasting* in that Season: Though, at the same time, 'tis a great part of the Design of that Ancient Epistle to shew, That the *Catholics* did not break Peace on that Account.

To what has been discoursed in the foregoing Papers concerning the Number of Days to be *fasted* by Christians, in That called *the Antepaschal Fast* or *Forty-Season*, where, in several places (as pages 111, and 113.) it has been observ'd, that, by making a Judgment from the Principle and Practice of the

Primitive Church it did appear that, abstracting from *Laws Ecclesiastical* Christians were obliged, *as of Necessity and by Divine Precept*, to the Observance of no more than *the most holy Passion Week, or those Days wherein the LORD (the Bridegroom) was Taken away*, the rest of the 40 Days being left to the Choice and Discretion of particular Christians, to *fast* as their several Occasions and Circumstances shou'd direct; (as they might better be trusted in those Early Days of Christianity, whilst *the Love of Christ which constraineth* Men to the chearful Practise of the severest Duties of Religion, remained warm and vigorous;) It may be here fit to add something more explicitly concerning the Power of the Church, What Obligation that might superinduce in this Matter, after that the gross Negligence of Christians (who too soon began to disrelish the *Church-Fasts*) forced the Governors thereof to exert their Authority, and guard the Duty by Ecclesiastical Canons and Decrees; And that Obligation extends to the binding Men to do that now by force of *Law* and Precept which antiently Christians performed (as all that succeeded them shou'd

shou'd have done) of *Choice* and Good-will, that is, Tho' not to such a rigorous *Fast* on every one of the 40 Days, as the *Romanists* wou'd be thought to practise, nor under such a severe Denunciation of punishment to the Offenders as was the Sanction of some of the *Jewish Fasts*, yet by virtue of our Obedience, and on pain of disobeying the Churches wholesom Orders, all capable *Christians* are, by her Authority, oblig'd to some degree of *Abstinence* and penitential Demeanor through the whole 40 Days, according to the Expression used in the preface to these Discourses, (in which the Doctors of the Church all agree) of *Observanda quotidiana, sed moderata jejunia*, of distinguishing, that is, every Day in the *Forty-Season*, from the very beginning of that space, by a more solemn and continent Behaviour, and, as hath been before observed, by setting apart some particular Days in that Season, (as the *Wednesdays* and *Fridays* especially) for *stricter Fasting* and Devotion.

So St. *Ambrose* for certain thought, as appears by his *practical* Expression, in one of his Sermons towards the

End

End of *Lent*, † *Behold*, says he, thro' the Mercy of God, we have now almost finished the enjoined *Abstinence of Lent*. Venerable *Bede* also, our Countreyman, (who flourished in the 7th Century) was of the same Opinion, *Vid.* That some degree of *Abstinence* was to be observed through the whole 40 *Days of Lent* (which, if we respect the precept of *Fasting*, was of Ecclesiastical Constitution only) as these Words of his in a Sermon on the last *Sunday in Lent* bear witness ‡ *Behold*, we have now through the help of God finished for the most part this *Fast of Lent*. And the question (as One speaks) which *Christians* were wont to propound to one another in **S. Chrysostom's* time, was not how many hours, or how many *Days* they had fasted in *Lent*, but how many *Weeks*: And you might bear them answer (none of them one, but) some two, some three, and some all the *Weeks* in that solemn *Fast*. Such religious Regard and Re-

† Propitiâ Divinitate, ecce jam penè transegimus *Quadragesima* indicta jejunia. Lib. de *Eliâ & Jejun.*

‡ Ecce jejunium *Quadragesimale*, Domino auxiliante, jam plurimâ ex parte complevimus. *Hom. in Domin. Palmarum.*

* ————— τῶν ἡμερῶν ἡσυχίας ἐστὶν ἡ τεσσαρὰ. *Hom. 16. ad pop. Antioch.*
 ἡ τεσσαρὰ ἐστὶν ἡ τεσσαρὰ. *Hom. 16. ad pop. Antioch.*
 verence

verence did the Authority of the Church procure to this holy *Fast* of *Lent*, after that (as I before quoted St. Chrysostom, pag. 129.) *The Fathers meeting together had prescribed 40 Days of Fasting for Sanctification of Christians*, and the better to prepare them for the tokens and Pledges of God's Love at *Easter*. *the*

In defence of the Ancient Churches Interpretation of those words of our Blessed Saviour [*Then shall they fast in those Days*,] viz. That they do contain 'a divine Precept for *Fasting* on, and 'about the time of our LORD's Death 'and Passion; which sense hath been asserted above, p. 110. and 127. and some Argument founded thereon: Besides the ground for such an Exposition, taken from that particular Expression, *ὡς ἐνεῖται ταῖς ἡμέραις*, (mentioned pag. 74.) and their Tradition received from the Apostles concerning our Saviour's Meaning, joined with their own constant Practice; Hear the Opinion of † a very learned and judicious Person concerning the forecited Text; 'This Exposition of the Text ' (viz. *Luke v. 35.*) that under the

† Vid. *Discourse concerning Lent.* pag. 58.

New Dispensation, and after our Saviour's Death, there shou'd be *New Fasts*, and *New Men* to keep them, (such as were *renewed* by the Holy Ghost,) is very apt and natural: And if then, those general Words were by the first *Christians* applied in particular to that very Time of the Year in which He suffered, and on which they *fasted*, as by Apostolical Tradition; it is no Wonder. For such secondary Applications of Scripture, to Subjects not seeming at first sight to have been intended by it, is very usual in the New-Testament. And it is the known Manner of the *Jews* to accommodate the Words of the Bible to such Practices, as they take to be of Divine Authority, though they are hinted only and alluded to there, not expressed, much less commanded.

For the Words cited under the name of ^a *Origen* pag. 90. in the behalf of the great Antiquity of the *Lent-Fast*, which, taking in the whole sentence, run thus, *Hæc tamen non ideo dicimus, ut Abſtinentiæ Chriſtianæ fræna laxemus: Habemus enim Quadrageſimæ dies jejuniis conſecratos; habemus quartam & ſextam ſeptimanæ dies quibus ſoleniter*

^a *Hem. 10.*
in Levit.

niter jejunamus: Though, (as 'Bishop ^{e Paschal-}
Gunning observes) 'Gerard saith, the ^{Fast. App.}
 'Homilies, where these Words are ^{p. 486.}
 'found, are *Origen's* own, and though,
 'as the Bishop himself says, It cannot
 'be wondred that *Origen* shou'd men-
 'tion the *Quadragesima* in his Homi-
 'lies, who in his 8th Book against *Celsus*,
 'acknowledges and defends against
 'that Heretick the common Manner of
 'all *Christians* in observance of the
 'Παρεσχεῖν, or *Preparatory Fasts*; And
 though lastly, there may (here) be
 no Reason to suspect *Ruffinus* of ha-
 ving done wrong to *Origen* in his ver-
 sion of these Homilies; yet the Homi-
 lies being, at present, extant only un-
 der his Translation, and he having no
 very good Name for an exact Tran-
 slator, we are willing, with the Learn-
 ed Author of the ^{dPart 1st.}
'Discourse concerning ^{ch. 5. p. 74.}
Lent, to make any reasonable abate-
 ment for this Authority; especially ha-
 ving such sufficient Testimony without
 it, for the most Primitive Antiquity
 of the *Lenten*, or *Spring-Fast*.

If we respect the Ancient Decrees
 of Councils and Synods, made in fa-
 vour of the *Paschal Fast*, and to pro-
 cure an Observance of it, The 68th. a-
 mong

† Paschal.
Fast. App.
pag. 486.

mong those called *Apostolical Canons*, do's † under severe penalty censure either Bishop, Priest, or other Clergy, or Lay, *Ἐπισ ἢ κητεῦοι τὴν ἁγίαν Τεσσαρακοστὴν τῆ Πάσχα*, If any should not fast the holy Quadragesima, or space of forty, which precedes the Pasch, or Easter. The 50, 51, 52 Canons of the Council of *Laodicea*, provide not only for the keeping *ὅλην τὴν Τεσσαρακοστὴν*, and again, *πάσαν τὴν Τεσσαρακοστὴν κητεῦεν ἑξοφαγεῖντας*, but also that Men should beware, *Ἀπιμάζειν τὴν Τεσσαρακοστὴν*, lest they dishonour the forty Days ‡. *Synodus Gangrensis Can. 19.* thus speaks, *Ἐπισ τῶν ἀσκετῶν χαλεπὴς σωματικῆς ἀνάγκης ὑπερηφανεύετο ἢ ὡς τοῖς διδομένοις κητείαις εἰς τὸ κοινόν, &c.* 'If any of the Religious without any bodily necessity shall proudly contemn and break the Fasts delivered in common, and observed of the Church, a perfect deliberation in him rejecting them, let him be Anathema. Concerning which Decree, Bishop *Andrews* in his 5th Sermon of Repentance, pag. 216. saith thus, 'The Council of *Gangra* hath laid an Anathema on them that keep not the *Lent-Fast*, *Avoid it how they can that keep it not.* And another Council on the same subject

‡ Ibid. pag.
538 & 540.

expresleth it ſelf in theſe words, *Si quis inditum jejunium ſuperbiendo contempſerit & obſervare cum cæteris Chriſtianis noluerit, &c. Anathema ſit, niſi ſe emendare ſtatuerit.* Concil. Mogun. Can. 35.

To ſtrengthen what is ſaid pag. 59. and other places, That Chriſtians are as much, or more obliged to *faſt* than the Jewish People were, and that altho' the Precept for *faſting* be more ſtrict and ſevere in binding the latter than the former, Let theſe Words of † Bi-
 ſhop Gunning be regarded, 'The Chri-
 ſtian Law of Liberty (which is not
 'leſs obliging for being ſuch) is prin-
 'cipally a Law of Gratitude, which
 'is not wont to have all its Meaſures,
 'and Manner, and Degrees minutely
 'and expreſſy deſcribed. Yet ſuch ob-
 'ligation it hath to ſome great Evan-
 'gelical Mercies and Benefits from
 'God, (as thoſe of the Death, Paſſion,
 'and Reſurrection of Chriſt,) that ne-
 'ver did any Apoſtle, or other An-
 'cient Chriſtians, think the Chriſtian
 'Church leſs obliged to the ſolemn
 'Memory of thoſe *Faſts* or *Feaſts*, at the
 'ſet Seafon or Time thereof, (by them
 'that were well able and knowing
 'there-

*Paſchal or
 Lent-Faſt,
 pag. 495,
 496.*

' thereof,) tho' not bound by any ex-
 ' press written Precept so to do, as the
 ' *Jews* were, than they (the *Jews*) were
 ' to the Observation of their Paschal
 ' Feast, or their Humiliation on the Day
 ' of Atonement. For (as he goes on) no
 ' Christian heart may deny, that the
 ' Evangelical Benefits and Mercies
 ' which we have received of God be-
 ' yond what they had, do as much in-
 ' crease our Obligation in that regard
 ' beyond Theirs, as their Precept was,
 ' and needed to be more expressly writ-
 ' ten than Ours.

The

The Rareness, but Blessings of

F A I T H

A

S E R M O N

ON ACTS xvij. 34.

Lately preached at THRI P L O E, near

C A M B R I D G E.

The Friends, Brethren, &c.

of the Church of England

to the same

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OF THE ACTS XVII. 34.

ACTS. xvij. 34.

*Howbeit, certain Men clave
to him, and believed--*

THIS Chapter acquaints us with St. Paul's preaching in several parts of Greece; particularly at the famous City and University of *Athens*, renown'd for nothing more than that by the special Providence of God, (which many of that Academy denied) the Sacred feet of this great Apostle did once enter and tread their Streets, and his inspired Mouth published the Gospel to them. In the Discharge whereof, *according to the Wisdom given unto him*, he acted (as always) in a Manner worthy of himself. He first applies himself to the *Jews* of that City (towhom the Gospel was primarily sent) *disputing* with, or **discoursing* ^{a διαλέγομαι} to those his Brethren in their Synagogue, Verse 17. And, *his Spirit being stirred*, or **exasperated* within him, when (or be- ^{b παροργίζω} cause) he saw the City wholly given ^{πείρω}

κατείδδ-
λον εἶναι.

to Idolatry, or *full of Idols*, he confines not himself to the *Jews*, but in all places of Concourse takes Occasion to make known the Christian Doctrine to the heathen People; labouring to draw them off from their vain † Superstition, their absurd and slavish worship of the false heathen Deities, and from erecting Altars to ‡ Ghosts and departed Heroes; telling them
 ‘ There was One indeed most worthy
 ‘ their Adoration, even the Eternal
 ‘ Son of God in our Nature, who was

† Δεισιδαιμονία, i. e. φόβος δαιμόνων, from δίδω, timeo, & δαίμων, Deus, Genius, Dæmon:] Though this Word is sometimes used among Heathen-Writers in an ill Sense, to signify a needless and painful Errour, in worshipping the Gods, since, according to some of them, there was no such Thing, and according to others, the Gods took no notice of humane Affairs, and because they who did worship them, did it (as Maximus Tyrius speaks) μετὰ πολλὴν δούσαν, for fear of their Vengeance, and of being punished by 'em for their Sins; yet by others of the Heathen, who looked on their Pagan-Worship through a better medium, as that which tended to preserve the Affairs of the World in good Order, it is generally spoken of with Reverence, in a good, not evil Sense, and allowed the same Meaning with Religio (or Religion) it self; and it being found in an ancient Glossary that δεισιδαιμονία is rendered θεοσεβεία, and δεισιδαιμονία, by Helychius. φοβόφιλία, the fear of God, or Religion, the learned Dr. Hammond has, upon the whole, resolved, the Word when absolutely consider'd to lie under no ill Character, but to signify Religion in general, whether good or bad; as Acts xxv. 19. 'tis set to express the former. Vid. Hammond on Acts. xvij. 22.

‡ Superstitio, i. e. Superstitum cultus.

‘ call'd

‘ call’d by the saving name of J E S U S,
 ‘ the most Glorious Deliverer that ever
 ‘ the World knew, whom for his won-
 ‘ drous Condescension and most migh-
 ‘ ty Atchievements God had *exalted*
 ‘ *to his own Right hand*, and appointed
 ‘ the *Judge* of all the World; and that
 ‘ therefore, upon the surest Grounds,
 ‘ he did now also inform them, that
 ‘ there wou’d certainly be a *General*
 ‘ *Resurrection*, wherein all Men that
 ‘ ever lived shou’d be summoned to
 ‘ give an account of their *Actions*:
 Which implied, both that God took
 a particular *Notice* of human Affairs,
 and also that Man enjoyed the *entire*
liberty of his Will.

These things therefore coming to the
 Ears of the chief Philosophers and lear-
 ned Men of *Athens*, namely, those two
 contrary Sects, the *Epicureans*, and *Sto-*
icks; one of which denied *all Providence*;
 the other all *freedom of Will*; they hasten
 to encounter the Apostle, who perse-
 vering in his heretical Doctrine (as they
 account it) they call him *Babler*, or
 (or as the † Original imports) *vile and* † σπερμω-
worthless Person, one who being de- λόγος, ἰ. ε.
 ceived himself, took a great deal of Semini-
 ill Pains to propagate his Errors, and verbius.

κατείδδ-
λον εἶναι.

to *Idolatry*, or *full of Idols*, he confines not himself to the *Jews*, but in all places of Concourse takes Occasion to make known the Christian Doctrine to the heathen People; labouring to draw them off from their vain † *Superstition*, their absurd and slavish worship of the false heathen Deities, and from erecting Altars to ‡ *Ghosts* and departed Heroes; telling them
 ‘ There was One indeed most worthy
 ‘ their Adoration, even the Eternal
 ‘ Son of God in our Nature, who was

† Δεισδαίμωνία, i. e. φόβος δαιμόνων, from δίδω, timeo, & δαίμων, Deus, Genius, Dæmon:] Though this Word is sometimes used among Heathen-Writers in an ill Sense, to signify a needless and painful Error, in worshipping the Gods, since, according to some of them, there was no such Thing, and according to others, the Gods took no notice of humane Affairs, and because they who did worship them, did it (as Maximus Tyrius speaks) μετὰ πολλὴν δυν, for fear of their Vengeance, and of being punished by 'em for their Sins; yet by others of the Heathen, who looked on their Pagan-Worship through a better medium, as that which tended to preserve the Affairs of the World in good Order, it is generally spoken of with Reverence, in a good, not evil Sense, and allowed the same Meaning with Religio (or Religion) it self; and it being found in an ancient Glossary that δεισδαίμων is rendered θοσεύς, and δεισδαίμωνία, by Helychius. φοβοφία, the fear of God, or Religion, the learned Dr. Hammond has, upon the whole, resolved, the Word when absolutely consider'd to lie under no ill Character, but to signify Religion in general, whether good or bad; as Acts xxv. 19. 'tis set to express the former. Vid. Hammond on Acts. xvij. 22.

‡ Superstitio, i. e. Superstitum cultus.

‘ call'd

‘ call’d by the saving name of J E S U S,
 ‘ the most Glorious Deliverer that ever
 ‘ the World knew, whom for his won-
 ‘ drous Condescension and most migh-
 ‘ ty Atchievements God had *exalted*
 ‘ *to his own Right hand*, and appointed
 ‘ the *Judge* of all the World; and that
 ‘ therefore, upon the surest Grounds,
 ‘ he did now also inform them, that
 ‘ there wou’d certainly be a *General*
 ‘ *Resurrection*, wherein all Men that
 ‘ ever lived shou’d be summoned to
 ‘ give an account of their *Actions*:
 Which implied, both that God took
 a particular *Notice* of human Affairs,
 and also that Man enjoyed the *entire*
liberty of his Will.

These things therefore coming to the
 Ears of the chief Philosophers and lear-
 ned Men of *Athens*, namely, those two
 contrary Sects, the *Epicureans*, and *Sto-*
icks; one of which denied *all Providence*;
 the other all *freedom of Will*; they hasten
 to encounter the Apostle, who perse-
 vering in his heretical Doctrine (as they
 account it) they call him *Babler*, or
 (or as the † Original imports) *vile and*
worthless Person, one who being de-
 ceived himself, took a great deal of
 ill Pains to propagate his Errors, and

† σπερμα-
 λογος, i. e.
 Semini-
 verbius.

unsettle the Minds of Men, which were far better instructed before: And not content herewith, they bring him (or rather, as it seems, in a frantick Zeal, hurry him) to † *Areopagus*, their chief Court of Judicature, where all *new Gods*, and the Religion to be introduced by them, were tried and judged, whether they were fit to be received or no.

Here *St. Paul* being set in the midst of the Assembly, where he might be seen of all, and having begun his Defence very rhetorically in a Form of entreating Favour, by owning to his Judges that their City appear'd indeed to be the **most devoted to the business of Religion* of any that he had met with, he presently takes Occasion from one *Altar*

† The Compound Greek word [*Ἀρειοπαγος*] is best retain'd in the Latin and other Languages, rather than to divide it, as the English have done, into *Mars's hill*, as if it had its denomination from that Heathen God of War; whereas, the true Etymon of the Original is from *Ἀρεος*, which, from *Ἄρης*, or *Mars*, imports the committing of Murder, or Violence, and so denotes the sort of Causes that were chiefly judged in that Court (viz. those of Murder) and *παγος*, an Hill, or Ascent, whereon this Court stood. Vid. Hammond on Acts xvij. 19.

* So Dr. Hammond renders *θεοδιδασκαλίας ἵππων ἡρώων*. I look upon you to be given to the Worship of more Gods or Dæmons, than any: And the Vulg. Lat. *Video vos Superstitiosiores* (scil. solito, vel aliis.)

that

that he observ'd amongst 'em, inscrib'd,
To The Unknown God, to preach unto
 them *the living, and true God*, or to
 instruct them in the clear knowledge of
 that God, whom they before *ignorantly*
worship'd; telling them, 'That the God
 ' whom in that place they acknowledg'd
 ' not to know, and yet professed to wor-
 ' ship, was the very God that he preach'd,
 ' even the Invisible God of Heaven and
 ' Earth, who being Creator of all things,
 ' must needs be the Ruler or Gover-
 ' nour of them, and who having Him-
 ' self made all things, whether seen or
 ' unseen, must needs be of infinitely
 ' greater Majesty than to be contain'd
 ' in any Shrine or *Image* of Man's fram-
 ' ing, or fitly worship'd by any such
 ' poor and sorry Representation; that
 ' he having made all Nations of Men,
 ' first from one *Adam*, and then (as it
 ' were again) from one *Noah*, whence
 ' Mankind were properly stiled *his Off-*
 ' *spring* (as *some also of their own*
 ' *Poets acknowledged*;) it was highly
 ' irrational to imagine, that so *immense*
 ' a Deity cou'd be like to Mortal Man,
 ' of a *Corporeal* Make or Shape, or that
 ' it was possible for humane Wit to
 ' contrive any thing, though of the
 ' most curious or costly Fashion, that

' cou'd deserve so venerable an Attri-
 ' bute; and that it was equally absurd
 ' to think that a Being of such infinite
 ' Power, who with a word speaking,
 ' cou'd call a whole Universe into Exi-
 ' stence, was to be pleased or propi-
 ' tiated by a *golden Shrine* or Picture,
 ' as if he wanted any of our *Gifts*, who
 ' himself *gave to all Life, and Breath,*
 ' *and All things*: He further exhorts
 ' them, that this most glorious God
 ' created the World and made Man-
 ' kind *to dwell on all the face of the*
 ' *Earth*, and in great Order and Wif-
 ' dom disposed the *† Times and the bounds*
 ' *of their Habitation*, all to this very
 ' End, that (as he speaks in another
 ' place) *those Things which are not* of
 ' themselves visible, *even the infinite*
 ' *Power and Divinity of God* might
 ' yet by his works of Creation, and his
 ' various Dealings in the World, be (as in
 ' Reflexion) visibly discernible, so far as
 ' that, Men might be enabled (notwith-
 ' standing the *blindness* of their present
 ' sinful State) *to feel after Him, and find*
 ' *Him (who is not far from every one of*
 ' *us)* and pay him that Homage which is

† That is (says Dr. Whitby) the several Seasons of the
 Year. *Vid.* in loc.

due from Creatures to their bounteous
 Creator: This easy and most reason-
 able Duty, however, (as he goes on)
 had been grossly neglected and forgot-
 ten, whilst Men, instead of honour-
 ing the true God, (Oh shameless Stu-
 pidity!) were come to fall down to
 Stocks and Stones, taken them to be
 Gods that were the Work of Men's
 hands: Which excess of Ignorance
 and Impiety, tho' long continued in, it
 yet pleased the God of Mercies (he
 tells them) so far to pass over, as
 not to be provoked thereby, (as he
 justly might) to cast off such Miscre-
 ants for ever; but on the contrary,
 (which shoud be matter of great Joy
 to them;) He, in wonderful loving
 Kindness, had sent his Own Son from
 Heaven to recover them out of their
 lost Estate, by offering them a place
 of free Pardon on Reformation, and
 also promising sufficient Strength to
 enable them to reform their Lives;
 Which Offer he did now earnestly
 require all Men to accept of and em-
 brace, in as much as he had withall
 firmly appointed a Day, wherein by
 that his Only Son, he wou'd judge the
 World, and condemn those wretch-
 less Sinners to endless Punishment,
 who

‘ who shou’d reject such Terms of Sal-
 ‘ vation: And of this he had given
 ‘ Assurance unto all Men, in that he
 ‘ had lately raised up Christ from the
 ‘ Grave, to be the Judge of Quick
 ‘ and Dead.

‘ This was the substance of St. Paul’s
 Oration to the *Athenians*; in which
 he said enough, in Reason, to make
 that deluded People resolve to beat
 down all their Idols and false Gods,
 together with their Idolatrous Temples;
 attacking at the same time, with admi-
 rable skill and divine Wisdom, the
 fond and foolish Tenets and inveterate
 Prejudices of their most eminent Philo-
 sophers, the *Stoicks*, and *Epicureans*;
 The latter of which Sects, maintain’d
 the *World* to be made by a *Casual Con-
 flux of Atoms*; and though, with a
 strange Inconsistency, they allowed a
 God, yet they denied that he exercis’d
 any † Providence over the World, or
 that there was any ‡ *State after Death*,
 or *future Rewards and Punishments*;

† Τὸ μακάριον ἔσθαρτον, ἔτι αὐτὸ πρόγματι ἔχει ἔτι
 ἄλλω παρὲς ἐν αἰσθητῇ γὰρ πᾶν τὸ πνεῦμα. Diog. Laert.
 in Vit. Epic.

‡ Ὁ θάνατος ἐστὶν ὡς ἡμᾶς, τὸ γὰρ ἀβυσθίαν, ἀναισθη-
 τῆς τὸ δὲ αἰσθητῶν, ἐστὶν ὡς ἡμᾶς. Ibid.

they

they taught also that God was of a * Corporeal Shape (which gave too much Countenance to Image-worship;) The former held the † World it self to be a God, and ‡ Matter to be Eternal, and that all humane Actions were subject to an χ absolute Fate, or Fatality: Which last Position, as cutting off the freedom of Man's Will destroy'd all No-

* *Ἐπίκερως ἀνθρωποειδῆς μὲν πάντες τὰς θύας ποιεῖ. Plut. de Plac. Philos. Lib. 1. cap. 7. Vid. & Ciceronem lib. 1. de Nat. Deor. Quam rem Epicurus ipse sic explicat; Deos scil. Hominis formā præditos, similes esse magnis & humanā formā præditis Simplichris in somnis incurrentibus. Empir. contra Mathemat. p. 312. Vid. Menag. Observ. Lib. X. Segm. 139.*

† *Οἱ Στωικοὶ δὲ ὅλον τὸν κόσμον, σὺν ταῖς μετέσφι αὐτοῦ, θεωροῦντες Θεόν. Didym. apud Euseb. de Præpar. Evang. l. 15.*

Λέγουσι ὅτι κόσμος αὐτὸν, τὸ Θεόν, τὸ ἐκ τῆς ἀπάσης ὕλης ἰδιοποιεῖν, ὅς δὲ ἀφθαρτός ἐστι, καὶ ἀκίνητος, κατὰ χρόνον ποιεῖς ἐξ ἑαυτοῦ ἀναλίσκων εἰς ἑαυτὸν τὴν ἀπάσιν ὕλην, ὅτι πάλιν ἐξ ἑαυτοῦ γεννᾷ. Diog. Laert. in Vit. Zenon. Lib. 7. Segm. 138.

Totum hoc quo continemur, unum est, & Deus est; & Socii ejus, & membra sumus, Sen. Epist. 97.

Balbus Stoicus, ipsum mundum, cum nihil eo fieri excellentius possit, animantem esse & Deum judicabat. Cic. de Nat. D. lib. 2. Vid. & Menag. Observ. Lib. 7. Segm. 147.

‡ Mundus, secundum Stoicos, dicitur æternus, ut qui post exustionem iterum nascetur, iterumque certis periodis, & nunquam desituri. Vid. Menag. Observ. in Laert. Lib. 7. Segm. 141.

Boethius, & Posidonius, & Panatius, Viri in Stoicis dogmatis primarii, relictis exustionibus Mundique renascentiâ, ad divinius dogma de immortalitate Mundi transfugerunt. Vid. Menag. Observ. in Laert. Lib. 7. Segm. 143.

χ Καθ' εἰσαρμύνην φάσι τὰ πάντα γίνεσθαι (οἱ Στωικοὶ.) Ἐστὶ ὅτι εἰσαρμύνῃ, αἵτια πᾶν ὄντων εἰσαρμύνῃ, ἢ λόγος καθ' ὃν ὁ κόσμος διατάσσεται. Diog. Laert. in Vit. Zenon. Lib. 7. Segm. 149.

tion

tion of a *future Judgment*, which must be founded (or not at all) on the *Liberty* of *humane Actions*; And tho' they sometimes owned that the *Soul did subsist after Death*, and that it was to *live long, tho' not alwaies, in a future State*, yet this they taught with so much Fluctuation and Doubting, as shew'd it to be far from being a fix'd Principle amongst them.

These (then) were some of the false and mistaken Opinions of those two Sects: All which the intelligent Hearer will discern to be most acutely and fully confuted by the excellent Reasoning of the Apostle; who so plainly and convincingly asserted, *One God of Infinite Power and Majesty*, Maker of the World, and exercising a *particular Providence* over it; who now called all Men to the *Duty of Repentance*, and wou'd certainly bring them before a *final Judgment*, there to receive Sentence of everlasting *Rewards*, or *Miseries*, according to the *nature* of their *Actions*.

Οἱ Στωικοὶ εἰρμὸν αἰσῶν ποιεῖσι, τὰς αἰῶνας, τὰς αἰῶνας καὶ ἐπισυνδράμει ἀπαράβατον. Plut, de Plac. Philos. Lib. 2. cap. 28. in quo Fati naturam exquirat.

Cicero, in libro *De Fato*, Fatum causarum seriem sempiternam appellat.

Yet

Yet this Discourse, deliver'd with so much plainness and Evidence, did so far offend the *Athenian* Auditors, prejudiced both by Custom and Interest against the Apostles Doctrine, that some of them, the *Epicureans* especially, who denied all *future Life*, when *St. Paul* had made an end of Preaching (if they did forbear so long) fell a scoffing; (*some mocked*, says the Text,) and others, the *Stoicks*, ('tis likely) who had got some glimmering Notion of a *Life after Death*, said, *They wou'd hear him again of that Matter.*

So the Apostle, as *St. Luke* relates, departed from among them; leaving those *Judges* to their own Debates; and though his Sermon had no great Effect upon them, yet was it not altogether without Success neither; for, we read that *Dionysius* (Blessed *Dionysius*) † the *Areopagite*, (i. e. says *Dr. Ham-*

† So called, not because he lived in that part of the City where the *Areopagus* stood, but for being one of the *Judges* of that Senate, which was by all looked on with such Reverence, on account that none but Men famed for their Gravity and Uprightness in judging were chosen to sit there, (where also they admitted not rhetorical Pleas, but simple Narrations only, choosing the Dark that they might not be moved

mond, one of the Judges or Senators in *Areopagus*) and the beloved Woman *Damaris* (probably a Spectatour in that Court) with some few others, were so far affected with what he said, as to believe his Doctrine, and associate with him: *Howbeit*, says the Text, (*i. e.* tho' there was so much *mocking*, and scoffing at the Apostle, and such inveterate Prejudices entertain'd against both him and his Doctrine, yet some few, who were better disposed,) *certain Men*, or Persons *clave to him*, and *believed*.

The Words may, perhaps, appear to be a plain and less considerable Passage of holy Scripture; but they do really comprize a great Deal in them; *Believing* and *cleaving*, or adhering to an *Apostle*, being no small Things; *Faith*, or *Belief* here being not like the giving our assent to any common Report, which only makes a Man more knowing or intelligent; but this Religious *Belief* is a sure Evidence or Sign of Grace, and both a Condition, and Pledge of Salvation. It produces the

to Compassion by the Sight of the Malefactor, and giving their Judgment without a Word (speaking;) whence it came to pass that an Areopagite signified proverbially an excellent Person. Vid. Hammond on Acts xvij. 19.

greatest

greatest Change in the World, a Change from *Darkness to Light*, from a vain, melancholy, unmanly and hurtful *Superstition*, into the glorious *Liberty of Christians*, and, by a Power communicated to it, translates the *Believer* from the *Kingdom of Satan*, into that of *CHRIST and God*. Such Happiness did those two Faithful Persons, *Dionysius*, and *Damaris* his Wife, (as Dr. *Hammond* thinks her to be) with some others, receive by *St. Paul's* preaching at *Athens*.

Why no more came into the *Faith* upon his Preaching there, we have a good Account given us, Chap. 13. where, after such another Sermon to the Gentiles, *St. Luke*, the Writer of this Book, Verse 48. speaking of the issue of that Discourse, says, *As many as were ordain'd to Eternal Life, believed*; that is, not those, and those only who by any *absolute Decree* were predestined to Salvation, whilst all the rest that heard *St. Paul*, were, by the *Divine Ordination*, doom'd to final Perdition, (an Opinion most unworthy of God, and, repugnant to his revealed Will;) But according to the use of the Word $\tau\epsilon\lambda\epsilon\gamma\mu\delta\omega\iota$ (from $\tau\epsilon\lambda\epsilon\omega$, *ordinare, disponere*,) both in profane

Vid.
Hammond
in loc. *Acts*
13. 48.

fane and sacred Writers, as many as were in a good *Disposition* to reform, and live vertuous Lives, agreeably with the best Rules of Vertue and Piety, that is, (taking the word *πελαγιδῶν*, or *dispositi* in the largest Sense) all those Gentiles who by Means of becoming Profelytes to the Jews, or by Conversation with that People, or some other Way, had learnt to renounce the *Idolatry* of their Country, and to embrace the Worship of the *one only true God*, and who, as became piously disposed Persons, had spent some time in the study of Vertue and Religion, had attain'd some belief of the *Soul's Immortality* and *another Life* after Death; by consideration whereof, and the assisting *Grace* of God, they had arriv'd at some of that *ingenuous noble Temper* (so remarkable in the *Bereans*) which makes Men very inquisitive and diligent to learn and understand more concerning God and Religion, than they do at present apprehend, and also so modest and humble as still to leave an open Ear to farther Instruction; and who, lastly by such good Means, had been brought so far to enlarge their Thoughts, as to begin to think there might be a God without *Parts* or *Passion*,

sions, of too great *Majesty* to be represented by an *Image*, and of such *Immensity*, that he might be worship'd in every place, and address'd to every where; and to be willing also to lay aside their *gaudy Pictures*, and pray to an *Unseen Deity*; All, I say, who were thus, or in such a degree *prepared* or *disposed* to receive the Gospel, did, upon St. Paul's Preaching to them, embrace it *to the hope of Eternal Life*; whilst the far greater part, having acquir'd no such good *preparation* of Mind, but remaining in their Heathen Prejudices against the *Unity of God*, and the *Spirituality* of his Nature, and having their Affections so set on a *paint-ed Image*, that they cou'd not hear of an *Invisible Deity*, and being so devoted to the *obscene Customs* of their Idol-Temples, that they cou'd have no *Fancy* for the *chaste Rights of Vertue*; whilst these, I say, the far greater Bulk of St. Paul's Audience, when they heard, did reject the Gospel, or *put it from them*, shewing themselves by their *Indisposition* to Piety and Reformation of Life, to be, for the present, at least, both *incapable* and *unworthy* of *Eternal Happiness*, or of being admitted *Candidates* for it.

P

This

This was the Case of the generality of the *Athenians*, when, (and though) *St. Paul* was their Preacher: They were so far sunk in Image-worship, and Heathen-Notions, and had their Minds so much debased by their gross *Immoralities*, that the Christian Doctrine, though so powerfully recommended, cou'd make no Impression on them; nay, was received by them, with Scorn and Contempt; all for want of *honest* and *prepared* Hearts; Only *Dionysius* and his Lady (as we now speak) with some others of lesser Note, who probably, paid their Devotions to one or more of those Altars which were dedicated Θεῷ Ἀγνώστῳ, to the *Unknown God*, and had most Conversation with the *Jews* of that Place, from whom they might learn the Knowledge of the *true God*, shewed themselves, in the Event, to be τετραμήροι εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον, or εὐθετοὶ εἰς Βασιλείαν Θεῶν, well disposed or fitly qualified for the *doctrine of Eternal Life*.

The Account given us how these *Athenians* came to have any Altars *To the Unknown God*, is this: That a great and sore Pestilence happening amongst them, which cou'd be stay'd or appeas'd by no Application to any
of

of their own Deities, in this Distress they had recourse to one *Epimenides*, a Person much in Esteem for being † *be-† Θεοφιλέ-
loved of God*, who directed them to this Lustration, That they shou'd bring several Sheep, both black and white to *Areopagus*, and there permit them to go whither they wou'd about the City, till they came to lie down, and wherever they rested, there he appointed that they shou'd kill and sacrifice them, *πρὸς ἄγνωτον Θεῷ*, to a fit God, or a God to whom Sacrifices were due: which being done, the Plague ceased; And ever since, they have had at *Athens* ‡ Altars dedicated To the Unknown ‡ *Βάμους
ἀγνώστου,
Laert. in
Epimen.
vid. Ham-
mond in
loc.* God that healed them.

What we farther learn from this notable Passage of *St. Paul's* Preaching at *Athens*, is, That 'tis good for Men to make use of that degree of Grace they have attained, and better to be of a wrong Religion, than none at all. Because the *Athenians* were *δευδαίμονες*, i. e. * *more religious* in their way, and *more addicted* to the worship of the Gods than other Cities, and, as *Hea-then* Authors inform us, did exceed all Others in their Diligence *εἰς τὰ Θεῶν*, about the Gods; And particularly they having arrived so far (whether through

* See
Hammond
in loc.

Choice, or rather, as was before observ'd, from a providential Necessity) as to have amongst them one or more Altars erected *To the Unknown God*, which was in reality the *True One*, tho' under a Confession of *Ignorance*;) 'tis very probable, that this Worship of theirs and Profession of Religion, tho' in a much mistaken or imperfect manner (yet shewing that the same People might, likely, become very devout and Religious Persons, were they put in a right Way) was one great Reason, amongst others, which moved Almighty God, (who *breaks not the bruised Reed, nor quenches the smoking Flax*, but delights to further the least hopeful *beginnings*) to send his Apostle amongst them, to instruct them in the Knowledge of Himself, that whom they now *ignorantly*, tho' zealously worship'd, Him, St. *Paul* (by his Ministry) might declare more perfectly unto them.

To make now some Application to our selves.

The People of this Land are observed by Writers, at their first Conversion to Christianity to have had, like the *Athenians*, a great number of *Idols* or *False Gods* amongst them. The
Brit-

Brittains, and especially the *English*, have all along had the Character of being a † *Religious People*, very much addicted to the Profession of some Worship or other, and apt to be mightily concern'd about it. This Disposition of the Country might probably, amongst other Motives, incline Almighty God to bless this Nation with *the Sound of the Gospel*, before many others; And that (as we are credibly inform'd) by the Ministry of the † very same Great Apostle who preached to the *Athenians*, even *St. Paul* himself. The reception of the Gospel was here, as in other places, at the first, by slow steps and degrees; Men not being easily brought off from a fond *Superstition*: But to pass over those first Beginnings and all intermediate Times (in some of which the Christian Faith has flourish'd as gloriously in this Island, as perhaps in any of the Countries of the East, where like a *Bridegroom*, or the *Morning-Sun* it had its first Setting out) and to come home to our own Days, there are some, and too many in this very Age, who treat the Messengers of CHRIST, as the *Athenians* did *St. Paul*, in terms of Contempt, calling them *false Apostles*, de-

† Vid. Col-
lier's Eccle-
siastical
Hist. init.

† Bp. Stil-
lingfleet's
Orig. Brit.

ceitful Workers, Cheats, Impostors, and What not? Whilst in this, however, we are at present unlike that Heathen-City, that the generality of our People do make some Profession of the true Religion; at least, this may be said, that Christianity is, at this time, the National, established, and prevailing Worship of the Land: But yet let the Britains hear, and consider whether they all worship Christ according to his Mind, and the Prescript of the Apostles.

† Tis certain that we have Sects amongst us, as well as they had in Greece, (tho' of a different kind,) and those not wanting for Numbers neither, some of which deny a † Christ without them, a Saviour suffering at Jerusalem; and so of consequence, as well as by direct Confession, denying both the Father and the Holy Ghost: Which Unbelievers therefore can no more pretend to be Christians, than the Epicureans, and Stoicks at Athens cou'd assume to themselves the knowledge of the true God, or the Belief of a Resurrection, the very Notion whereof they ridiculed and exposed.

† See Quaker-Books.

Besides these dark Professours (but pretending to be *Luminaries*;) others there are whom we deny not to agree with

with us in the Essentials of the Christian Faith, but who are yet thought to serve Christ very defectively: Those, I mean, who not duly considering that God is a *God of Peace and Order*, and that he has Respect to the *Discipline*, as well as *Doctrine* of Religion, do pretend to profess Christianity without regard to *Bishops-Orders* (that truly Primitive and Apostolick Institution;) and without sufficient Cause, dare to divide from the *Establisb'd Church*, in direct violation of the Christian Duty of *Meekness*, which enjoins us, "To pay a great Deference to the *Judgment* and Decisions of the Particular Church where we live; to be very wary of resolving the said Church to have in any Case, *departed from the Faith*, and when it is clear and evident that she hath so *departed*, (and much more in things of lesser Consequence,) even then, so long as I am not formally excluded from her *Communion*, and have leave given me so to do, and can do it without *Scandal*, to join with that erroneous Church in all but her Corruptions: (So the Reverend † Dr. Hammond:) And as to what that Great Man and Casuist says, "that in

† Pr. Catechism, B.
2. pag. 96.
&c.

“ the apparent Defection of the Church
 “ wherein one lives, it will be highly
 “ commendable, and what Providence
 “ seems to direct, for any fit Person to
 “ endeavour to plant, or contribute
 “ to the Planting a *pure Apostolick*
 “ *Church*, or to reconcile and restore
 “ Peace between divided Members of
 “ the Church-Catholick; Yet the for-
 “ mer of these (I mean the attempting
 “ to plant or erect a *pure Aposto-*
 “ *lick Church*) is only commendable,
 “ (as he there expresses it) when there
 “ was none in that Country before, and
 “ when we may prudently hope to ef-
 “ fect it: Which how it can be the
 Case of our *Dissenters*, in setting up
Houses of Assembly, whilst there is a
 Pure Reformed Church established in
 the Land, and in prejudice to that
 Church, which in all things, do's come,
 at least, as near to the *Primitive Apo-*
stolick Form, as any Church now in Be-
 ing in the World, and for the Con-
 formity to whose *Doctrine and Disci-*
pline, there is such ample Provision
 made both by *Canons Ecclesiastical*, and
Parliamentary Acts, all remaining yet
 unrepealed, our Brethren of the *Sepa-*
ration wou'd do well to consider; Since,
 on these Accounts, notwithstanding
 any

any *Indulgence* to tender Consciences, (by which, when rightly understood, no more can be meant than an *Exemption* from certain Penalties imposed to discourage Non-Conformity; there being none, sure, so wild as to think that the Civil Power can excuse any Man from joining in the *True Establish'd Worship* of God;) Since on these Accounts, I say, they are judged by the wisest and best Men of our Communion (whom there is no Reason to suspect of Envy or Ill-will) to be *Separatists* from the Church, *Dividers* of the Body of Christ, and as such, however they may profess some sort of Worship, they are resolved and declared (like them at *Athens*) to serve God very *ignorantly*, and also in a very unaccepted Manner. It were much therefore to be wished that these Mistaken *Seētaries*, who cannot yet be persuaded to quit their *Errours*, instead of spending their Time (as they do) in fruitless Complaints against the most Apostolical Church in the World, for *unlawful Ceremonies*, and *unreasonable Terms* of Communion (and thus beating themselves to no purpose) wou'd pray Day and Night to God to give them some of that good *Disposition* of Mind, for which the *Beræans* are so much

Acts xvij.

11.

much celebrated, and which made that People to receive the Word with all readiness, and to search the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so as the Apostles declared them to be; and then there wou'd be hopes, that at least as many as St. Paul converted at Athens, wou'd be brought over to the Church, here and there a Person less involv'd in the Schism, and better prepared than ordinary; or rather, (since God is always ready to bless honest Endeavours) might we not expect to see converts come flowing into the Church, from Separation, like the Rivers in the South, and that we of this miserably divided Land might come to glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ (Oh wished-for Day!) with one Mind and one Mouth? And for the Encouragement of all who have any Inclination this Way, let it be here observed, that, altho' Prejudices and Prepossessions are very unhappy Things, yet from the Example of those once-deluded Pagans, but since glorious Christians, *Dionysius* and *Damaris*, we may learn that even an Idolatrous Education may be overcome, if, by the Divine Grace, Men can but attain an *ingenuous honest Temper*, such as may dispose them to mistrust themselves, and to believe others.

As

As for those unhappy Persons, who, whilst they profess to be Members of the Church, do yet openly, and publicly traduce the *Constitution* of it, and labour to bring an evil Report on the *Doctrine* of the Gospel, they deserve to be rank'd with those *Pagan Idolaters*, who called St. *Paul Babler*, and in spite of what he taught, wou'd persevere in their *blind Superstition*; only with this difference which they ought to be minded of, that it will be *more tolerable* for those poor Heathen-People who fell down to an Idol, in the *Day of Judgment*, than for such desperate Wretches as, in the bright Meridian Light, and Noon-day of the Gospel, have the hardiness thus to *contradict and blaspheme*, as we know † some do, who make *the lowest of the People*, to have an equal power of *of-*ficiating in Things Sacred, as those, who are rightly *Commission'd* for that purpose, and can afford the *Consecration* of the Sacramental Elements, by the Hands of the Minister, no better Name than that of *Conjuration*: The plain Consequence whereof is, that those *pretending Priests*, who perform in those Solemn Offices, are no better than *Cheats* and *Juglers*: But let us leave these

† Vid. *Rights of the Church: (an Infernal Book so called.)*

these Men (if I may so call them) to their own Madness and Delusions.

For our selves; who profess to be *Believers*, and to wonder at and detest such impious Blasphemies; Let us yet take care that we be not too secure of our own State, as if it were enough to *believe* aright and to *talk high* for Religion, whether we practice agreeably, or no. We cannot be too often reminded, that, although such excellent Things are spoken of *Faith* or *Believing*, yet 'tis all to be understood of a *true and living Faith*, a *Faith* which is *made perfect by Love*, and that shews it self by its *Fruits* to be a *saving Faith*: There is a *dead Faith*, and there is a *Form of Godliness*, but destitute of the *Power thereof*, which St. Paul admonishes all Christians to *shun* and avoid, as that which will do them no manner of Good, but rather aggravate their *Condemnation*. 'Tis worth observing, that those few, whom St. Paul converted at *Athens*, did not only receive his Doctrine, but they also (as the Text speaks) *clave to*, or associated with the Apostle; And that at a Time too, when it cou'd not but expose them to no small Danger to own him

him, whilst the whole Stream of an Idolatrous City ran against him: And shou'd ever Religion come to be persecuted in this Country of ours, we cou'd not approve our selves sincere *Christians*, if those of us who are able, did not stand by the Pastours of the Church, and as good *Obadiah* did, in a like Case, (as far as we can) *hide* those *Prophets* from the devouring Fire; and unless we all, at all times, endeavour to *hide* their Words, and *Precepts within our Hearts*, laying them up for the Direction of our Lives.

'Tis further very probable that, by the Expression in the Text of *cleaving to* the Apostle, is meant, That the two great Persons there mention'd were very diligent in attending on St. *Paul*, seeking for him when he was out of their Sight, and, as much as his Occasions wou'd permit, entertaining him in their House, whilst he staid at *Athens*; where, 'tis likely, they craved his Assistance in the Conversion of the rest of their Fa-
Rom. 16.
mily, and that St. *Paul* performed the
5.
Office of a Priest whilst he continued
1 Cor. 16.
19.
with them. And here let me observe that, in those primitive Times, pious *Christians* laboured to make their whole
Fa-

Families Converts to the Faith, and that when St. Paul sent Commendations to the Master of such a Family, he saluted him in this manner, *To such a one and the Church in his House*: whence I cannot also but take Occasion to join heartily in that Aspiration of the Reverend † Dr. Whitby, *O that this* ^{† Annot. on Acts 10. 2.} *was carefully observed and imitated by all that are called Christians! That every Master of a Family won'd strive to make his whole House Religious! Then shou'd we have as many little Churches or Congregations of Christians, as there are Families in the Land; And then shou'd Judgment (or Justice) run down as Waters, and Righteousness as a mighty Stream.*

Amos 5:
24.

To conclude; Let us not judge of our Christianity, or the Safety of our Condition merely by our outward Profession; We are deliver'd from *Superstition* and Errour, we are baptized into the Christian Faith, we are within the *Pale* of the Church, we frequent *Sermons and Sacraments*, we have the *Scriptures* open, and we read them often, we have an *Excellent Liturgy*, and we commend it highly: All this is well; and blessed be God that we got so far:
Sal-

are

But yet let us rather try our Title to Salvation by the following Enquiries: Have we, as becomes good Christians, Morning and Evening-Prayer in our Families? Do we conscientiously observe the Holy *Feasts* and *Fasts* of the Church? Do we acquit our selves well and wisely as to those Three Grand Christian Duties, *Humility*, *Meekness*, and *Charity*? Are we endowed with that lowly Opinion of our selves, (that *Poverty of Spirit* *Matth. 5. 3.*) which disposes a Man to think meanly of himself, that he is the *lowest*, the most impotent, and insufficient of all Creatures, *the least of Saints*, and *greatest of Sinners*? Are we apt in *honour* to prefer others before our selves? Have we that Infant *Child-temper* † prescribed by CHRIST, and most necessary to a *Christian*? that admirable lovely quality of *Humility*, generally look'd on with so much Respect by Men, and to which God has promised his *Grace*; contrary to the *Spiritual Pride* of the *Laodicean Church*, which said, *She was Rich*, *and increased with Goods*, and had need of nothing; not knowing that she was wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked? Again, Are we of that

† S. Matt.
18. 4. and
Chap. 19.
14.

Rev. 3. 17.

Job. xxxiv.
21.

† Amicos
diligere
omnium
est; Inimi-
cos solo-
rum Chri-
stianorum,
Tert.

that *meek quiet Gospel-spirit*, which (contrary to all murmuring and repining, all restless unsatisfiedness with our Condition) expresseth it self in a *patient* endurance of whatever it pleaseth God to lay upon us, in being *dumb*, or silent to the *Lord*, especially when our Sins and Trespases are visible in the Glas of our Punishment, then readily acknowledging with *Job*, *It is meet to be said unto God, I have born chastisement, I will not offend any more?* Towards Superiours, and more especially lawful Magistrates, do we practice this Duty of *Meekness* in promptly obeying all their Legal Commands, and submitting to their Censures, when we do not, or cannot obey their unlawful Ones, at least so far as to forbear all violent *Resistance*, by raising *Sedition*, or taking up Arms against them? Which will certainly bring upon the Actors greater Mischief, than they cou'd suffer by any present Wrong or Injury; since of whatever sort those Arms may be, whether only *smiting with the Tongue*, or the Pen, *speaking evil of Dignities*, yet, if the Opposition made, be properly a *War* or *Resistance*, it shall receive (says the Apostle) *condemnation*. With regard to † *Enemies*; Do we ex-

exemplify our *Christian Charity* in *bles-*
sing, and *praying* for them, begging of
 God that he wou'd give them a sight
 of their particular Errors, which prove
 so hurtful to themselves and others,
 and, in all personal Commerce with
 them, earnestly striving to *overcome*
their Evil with Good, but by no means
rendring Evil for Evil, Injury for In-
 jury, Contumely for Contumely, as
 expecting to *inherit* an unspeakable
Blessing our selves, and therefore *bles-*
sing all others? Which excellent Tem-
 per of Mind (says Dr. *Hammond*) yields
 a Man a great deal of present *Felicity*, in
 delivering him from those devilish Pas-
 sions of Anger, Revenge, and the like,
 and commonly in the End, by the Bles-
 sing of God, putting him in possession
 of his Desires much sooner than any
 turbulent Method wou'd do.

Thus I have mention'd some Instances
 of true Sterling Christianity (indulge
 the Metaphor) calculated by Divine
 Wisdom for the Peace and Happiness
 of Mankind; But O! where shall we
 find the *Practice*? Whilst this truly
Primitive Religion is almost quite
 smothered, and lost amongst us by an

Q

Affe-

Affectation of false Honour, and mistaken Liberty!

To put an end then to these Queries, Do we labour to *grow* and improve in the *grace* of *Christ Jesus*, being *rooted and grounded in Love*, and *established in the Faith*, as we have been taught, and *abounding therein with Thanksgiving*? This if we do, then, and then only can we assure our selves to be in the Number of those blessed Persons, of whom it is said in the Text, That they *clave to St. Paul and believed*.

F I N I S

ERRATA.

PAg. 9. in Marg. r. *συμβάλλω*. p. 70. Marg. r. Judgment
71. l. 4. *from the Botom dele too*. p. 77. in Marg. r. *Chry-*
sol. p. 89 Marg. r. *ἀπολόγηται*. l. ult. r. 472. 473. p. 95.
Marg. pro Colloq. r. *Collat.* p. 98. l. 3, r. *this*. p. 102. l. 10.
for Recommend r. Establish. p. 135. set the Note-mark l. 14.
at 40. l. 12. p. 191. l. 9. *from the bottom, after from them,*
add about the Manner of keeping Lent. p. 197, r. *ἀναυξί-*
εἶδον. p. 203 l. 6, r. *for the*. l. 9, dele Semicolon before *at*
Easter. p. 217. l. 8, r. *taking.* p. 206. l. 17, r. *παρεδιδ-*
μύας. p. 238. l. ult. r. *are got.* Cum aliis.

ERRATA

Page 1. In line 1. "the" should be "a".
Page 2. In line 1. "the" should be "a".
Page 3. In line 1. "the" should be "a".
Page 4. In line 1. "the" should be "a".
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